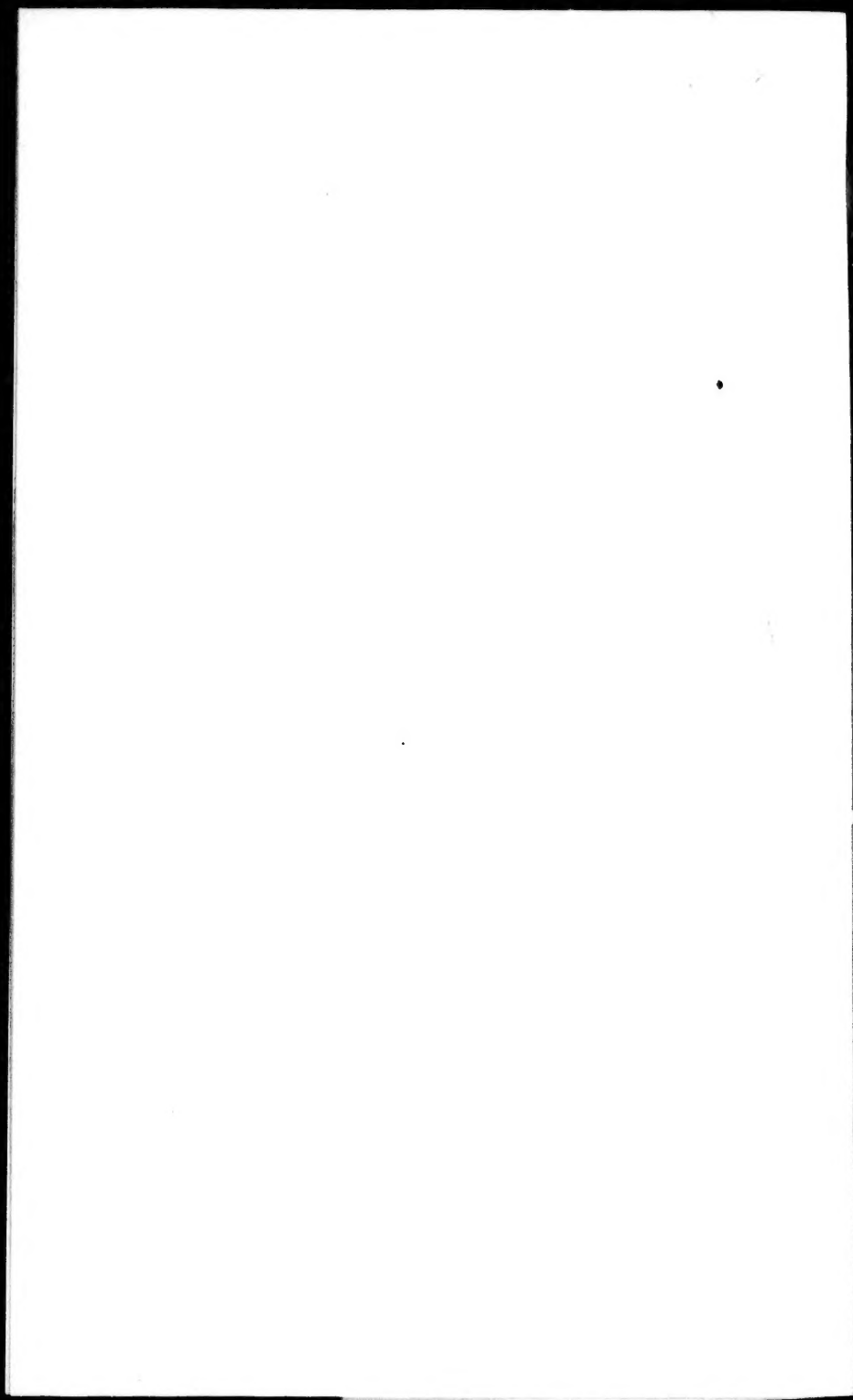




SASKATCHEWAN AND THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

A DIARY AND NARRATIVE OF TRAVEL, SPORT,
AND ADVENTURE, DURING A JOURNEY THROUGH THE
HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY'S TERRITORIES,
IN 1859 AND 1860.

BY
THE EARL OF SOUTHESK,
K.T., F.R.G.S.

" Here feel we but the penalty of Adam,
The seasons' difference, as the icy fang
And churlish chiding of the winter's wind
And this our life exempt from public haunt
Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything.
I would not change it."—*As You Like It*, ii. 1.

WITH MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

TORONTO: JAMES CAMPBELL AND SON.
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AND
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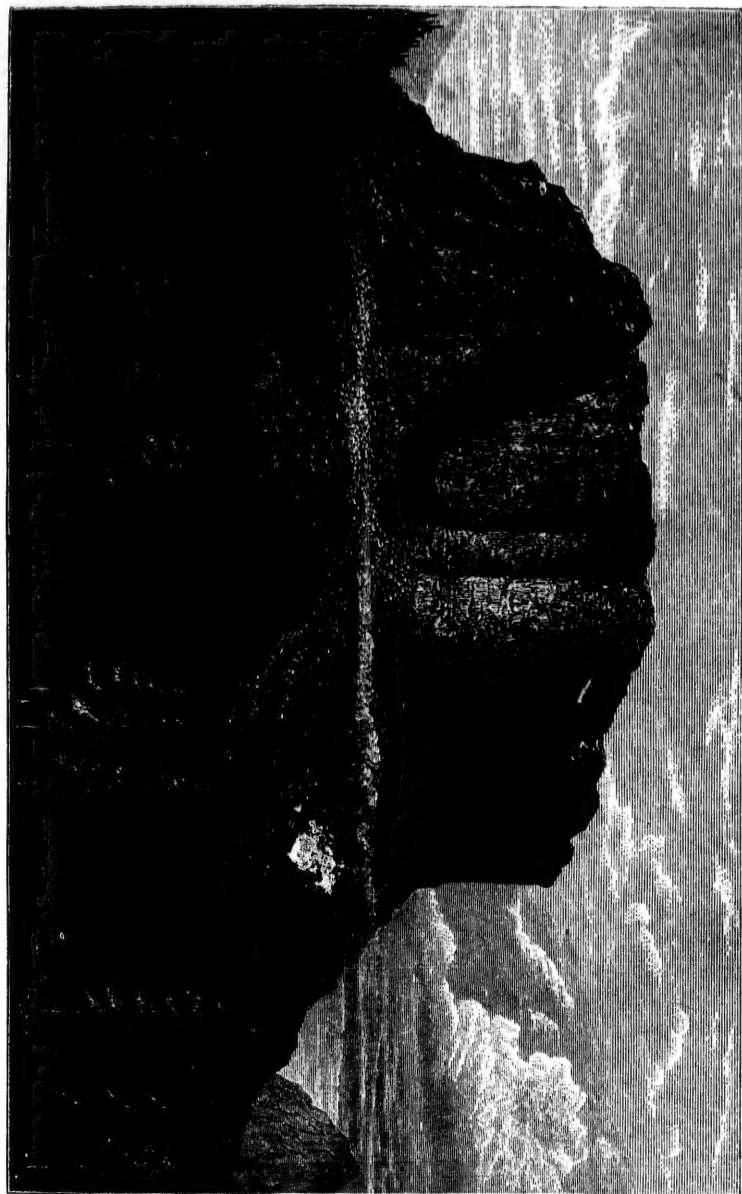
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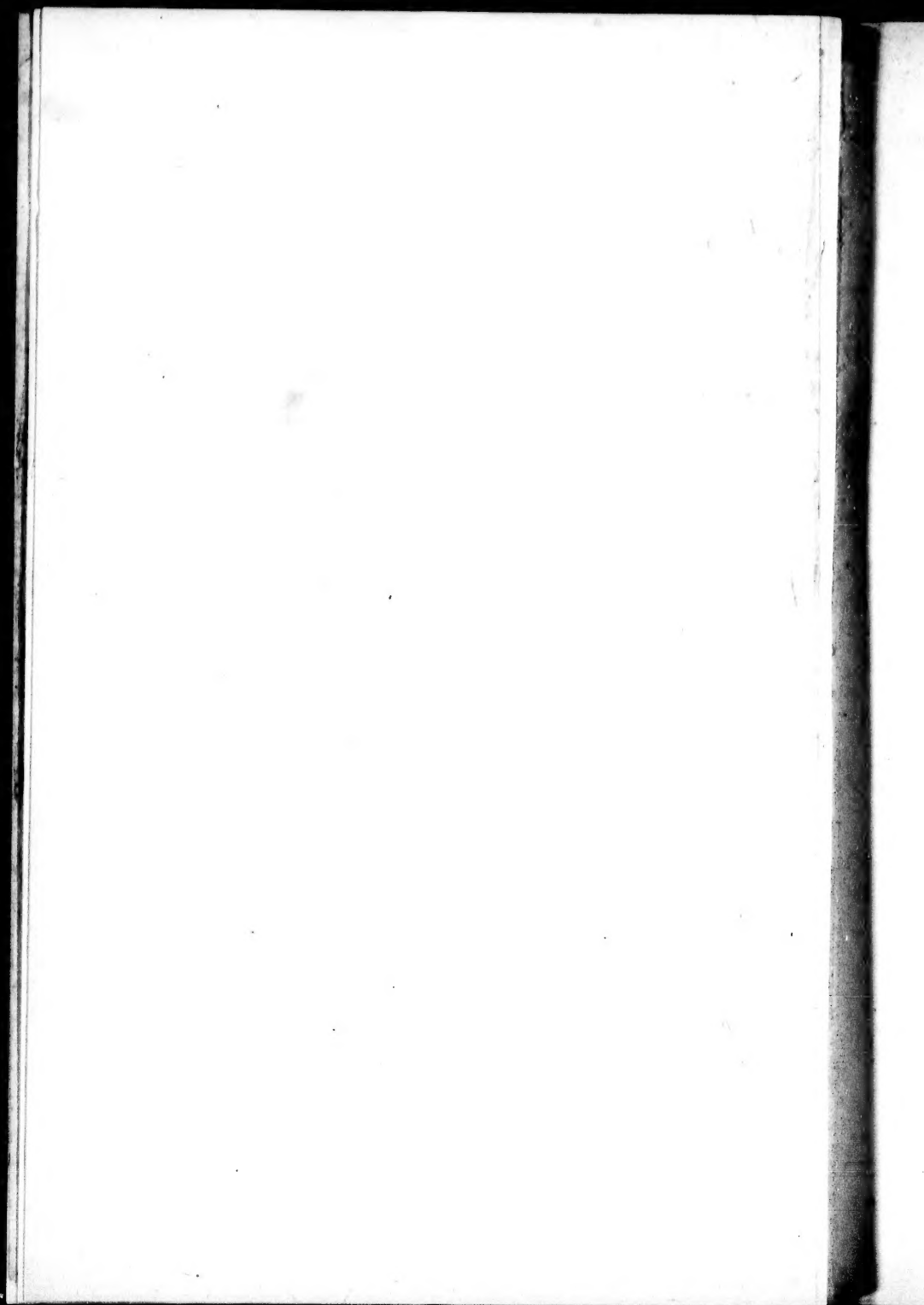
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MOUNT DALHOUSIE—NORTH RIVER VALLEY. (See p. 222.)



PREFACE.

THE foundation of this book is a very carefully-kept journal, for the most part noted down evening by evening over the camp fire, and none of it written, save a sentence or two, at intervals of more than a few days after the occurrences it relates ; so that it has at least the merit of being a true reflex of the thoughts and feelings of the time, as well as a faithful narrative of incident, conversation, and adventure.

In submitting such a journal to the public, three principal methods of dealing with it at once suggest themselves :—*First*, To print it as it stands, without omission or change ; *Second*, To preserve its form, but amend and amplify its diction ; *Third*, To recast the whole, and frame it into a continuous story. The first of these methods is almost impossible where the diary has not been originally designed for publication, but, formless and uneven, exists as a mere assemblage of ill-balanced notes, abounding in rough disjointed sentences, dry repetitions, and frequent references to matters of a private nature. The third system is that which is now-a-days most in favour, and its advantages are great and evident ; yet it frequently leads to many small exaggerations, amounting in the aggregate to a large untruthfulness, and almost certainly removes the freshness and individuality that characterise

even the feeblest of daily records ; in the present case, moreover, it would be more than usually hazardous, owing to the risk of any drafts on memory or retrospective fancy, after so long a lapse of time. The second method is generally the worst of all ; it is apt to unite the meagreness of the journal with the inexactness of an after narrative, while presenting neither the freshness of the one, nor the smoothness and freedom of the other : to work on this system, though sometimes scarcely avoidable, is to invite trouble and run much risk of failure.

After careful consideration, I have adopted a mixed plan, seeking as far as may be to combine the advantages of all these methods : I have employed sometimes one of them, sometimes another, varying the manner of my treatment according to the demands of each particular case.

My work, as it now stands, has been arranged on the following general system :—In certain parts, and especially towards the beginning of the volume, I have, with large omissions, fused my journal into something of the narrative form, while preserving its order and partially retaining its diction ; but where this has been done, I have endeavoured to make my intention clear, so that the reader may not be cheated into accepting the remarks of to-day as those of fifteen years ago. In other parts, I have followed my notes with some closeness, though not without more or less extensive alterations in the phraseology and construction. In most parts, however, and especially in the latter half of the volume, I have made a literal, or almost literal, transcript from my diary, *marking such extracts, when they occur, by single inverted commas.* Verbal changes, transposition of

sentences, and such-like trivial amendments, I have sometimes, though sparingly, admitted, and in certain rare cases I have added a few words to explain or elucidate my meaning ; but with these limitations the passages referred to may be relied on as actual extracts from the journal, even in portions that might be fancied too full or elaborate to have formed part of the real diary of a traveller in the wilds.

I do not, of course, attach value to the mere diction of my journal, as possessing any merit or importance in itself, but only as affording a guarantee of perfect accuracy so far as the writer could compass it. So careful have I been to preserve an exact truthfulness—which to my mind seems more important in a book of travels than picturesque word-painting or luxuriant adornments of style—that wherever I have offered anything beyond the most slight or obviously recent addition to the material existent in the journal, *I have bracketed off such passages*, however certain of their accuracy, lest some trick of memory should be leading me into confusion or mistake.

In the Appendix, besides a few miscellaneous papers at the end, I have collected various passages from my diary, which bore but slight relation to the main story, while from their length, character, or position, they tended to impede its progress. Being chiefly memoranda on Shakespearian and theological subjects,—with recent additions, expanded in the case of *Hamlet* almost into an essay,—they are little calculated, I fear, to interest the majority of readers ; some, nevertheless, may consider them worth perusal ; and for different reasons I was desirous to preserve those portions of my work, though

relegating them to a place where they need not be found unless sought for.

It was no definite purpose of mine to gather notes on subjects of a scientific nature, nor closely to record the geographical features of the country through which I travelled; where, however, details of that class do happen to occur, I have thought it best to give them as they actually stand, without attempting to improve them by private collation with the valuable works on the same part of northern America, which have appeared since the date of my journey,—every collation throughout the volume being distinctly pointed out, and very carefully acknowledged.* Superior in various important respects as some of these works must undoubtedly be to mine,—composed as they were by men of science attached to exploring expeditions organised by the British and Canadian Governments,—I cannot but remember that my information, however cursoryly noted, was either gained by personal observation, or from sources so good, that, in cases of difference (and a few such there may be), it is by no means impossible that I am in the right, and the more qualified author in the wrong. At all events, in such cases a comparison would be worth the making; so I have left the means of making it, instead of seeking to prevent disparities by the invasion of another man's store, whenever his materials seemed better than those collected by myself.

* I specially refer to the Reports by Captain Palliser's expedition, and to the books or Reports by Mr. Hind, Lord Milton, Captain Butler, and the Rev. Mr. Grant. While my book owes exceedingly little to any of these more recent publications, it is very largely indebted to Sir John Richardson's admirable *Fauna Boreali-Americana* (1829-31), from which (as will be seen) I have taken nearly all the zoological details that occur in the footnotes and elsewhere.

As regards the maps which appear in this volume, the larger of the two—comprising my general route through the Hudson's Bay Company's Territories—sufficiently speaks for itself, subject to the explanation that it has been prepared by the Messrs. Keith Johnston, with special reference to the aspect of the country, in its boundaries, settlements, railways, etc., as existing at the period of my journey,—viz. in the years 1859 and 1860.

The smaller map, however,—illustrative of my route while travelling in the Rocky Mountains,—demands perhaps more particular notice ; as I am personally accountable, not only for its arrangement, but for the details of a certain portion of the country, never before (nor probably since) visited by any European. On these points it may be noted, that the outlines of the map in question—which are of my own framing—have been composed by adjustment from the principal maps in the *Blue Books* relating to Captain Palliser's Expedition ; and that the newly explored valleys are laid down from a sketch made by me in 1860, while the memory of the localities was still fresh in my mind.

I regret that circumstances should have prevented me from forming a better record of my explorations than a mere approximate sketch,—for even on unimportant subjects accuracy will often prove to be of value,—but, such as it is, I offer it as some small tribute to the treasury of geographical knowledge.

As regards the illustrations, whether on separate pages or attached to the letterpress of the work, the greater number of these are derived from my own sketches and drawings ; the

exception entirely consisting in those which have been reproduced from photographs, or founded on them with some slight alteration.

To the former class belong all, save one, of the illustrations of scenery, every example of which may be relied on as a truthful though imperfect portrayal of Nature,—notwithstanding the roughness of my drawings, and the marvellous improvement in all artistic qualities which they have sustained under Mr. Whympers's skilful hand.

To the latter class must be referred the various representations of animals' heads, taken from skulls and stuffed specimens in my possession; also several relating to other objects—viz., *Red River Fire-bags*,—*Cree Whip*,—*Edmonton Hunter's Dag*,—*Assiniboine Fire-bag*, *Knife-sheath*, and *Pipe*,—all of which are engraved from excellent photographs by Mr. Rodgers, of Montrose; and in addition to these the view of *Minnehaha Falls*, by Mr. Whitney, a St. Paul photographer, the only landscape for which my own pencil is not originally responsible.

Most of the smaller and less elaborate illustrations belong to the former of these classes, being facsimiles, or nearly so, of pen-and-ink memoranda hastily sketched into my journal; the exceptions are as follows:—*Buffalo-hide Line*,—*Whisky*,—*Snow-shoe and Skida*,—sketches only recently prepared by me expressly for the present volume.

I will not add to an already lengthened preface, by attempting to detail the causes which are answerable for so many years' delay in the publication of these travels, nor by seeking to account for, or excuse, their publication at all under such

unusual circumstances—the work must vindicate itself, or fail; but, having offered the explanations that seemed absolutely needful, I now submit my book to the courteous reader, in the hope that, whatever the extent of its imperfections, it may still be found to possess some degree of interest, and to afford some new information in regard to a country not yet superfluously depicted and described.

[It may be well to inform the reader that the word *Saskatchewan* is pronounced with a strong accent on the second syllable—thus, Sās-kāteh-ŏ-wān.

ERRATA AND ADDENDA.

Pages 16, 17, 87, 88, for "Dr." Richardson read "Sir John" Richardson.

Page 16, line 8 of footnote, for "Mr." Sabine, read "Sir Edward" Sabine.

- „ 16, line 2 from bottom of page, for "*Tetrao Phasianellus*, the adult male of which is described," read "*Centrocerus Phasianellus*, the adult male of which is stated to be sixteen inches in length, while the *Pinnated Grouse* is described:" and page 17, line 8 from bottom of page, before "*Phasianellus*" insert "*(Centrocerus)*."

Pages 26, 27, insert accent over "Rivières."

Page 27, line 11, after "M'Intosh" insert "[? Mackenzie. See p. 355.]"

„ 66, line 1 of footnote, for "*Mayhagan*" read "*Mahaygan*."

„ 76, line 15, for "whence" read "where."

„ 86, lines 1 and 2 of footnote, for "*Mesaskatomiena*" read "*Misaskatomina*;" for Vol. I. read Vol. II.; for "*Aronia ovalis*" read "*Amelanchier ovalis*. *Aronia ovalis*—Rich. in Frankl."

„ 95, line 3 from bottom, for "rifle-bullet" read "heavy bullet."

„ 103, bottom line of page, for "291" read "281."

„ 137, line 1, for "31st" read "30th."

„ „ line 3 from bottom of page, for "tainted" read "scented."

„ 167, line 3 from bottom, for "model" read "medal."

„ 200, line 9, insert accent over "*épic*."

„ 221, line 5 from bottom, for "*Encrinites*" read "*Belemnites*."

„ 233, line 2 from bottom, after "humble" insert "gentle:" and line 3 of following page, strike out "of" before "whatsoever."

„ 249, line 22, for "half-dozen" read "half-a-dozen."

„ 265, line 2 of footnote, for "Wapoos" read "Wawpoos."

„ 287, lines 5 and 6 of footnote, read "Sússee" and "Chippeway" as in *italics*.

„ 294, lines 2, and 1 of footnote, for "travaux" "travail," read "travaillés" "travaille."

„ 316, title of woodcut, for "SKIDOR" read "SKIDA."

„ 370, line 4 of footnote, before "chief" insert "deceased."

„ 386, footnote, for "271" read "228."

„ 388, line 3 from bottom, for "intimation" read "indication."

„ 391, line 20, for "grim" read "your."

„ 393, line 21, for "strong-headed" read "strong-handed."

„ 405, line 19, for "I inhabit thee" read "I inhibit thee."

„ 413, line 18, for "There's Hector . . . there's a fellow," read "That's Hector, that, that, look you, that; there's a fellow!"

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CHAPTER I.

NIAGARA, LACHINE, ST. PAUL, CROW-WING.

TOWARDS the close of 1858, while visiting at the house of a friend, I happened to mention my desire to travel in some part of the world where good sport could be met with among the larger animals, and where, at the same time, I might recruit my health by an active open-air life in a healthy climate.

"Why not go to the Hudson's Bay country?" said one, who of all men was perhaps the best qualified to speak, exercising as he did a very powerful influence in the councils of the great Company that dominated those enormous territories in British North America. "The country is full of large game, such as buffalo, bears, and deer; the climate exactly what you require. If you decide on it," continued Mr. E.—, "I will write to the Governor, Sir George Simpson, and ask him to advise you as to your plans and arrangements. On the part of the Company, I can safely promise you every assistance it is able to give."

The more I considered this proposal, the better it pleased me. Such an opportunity seemed far too good to be lost; so, not long afterwards, I renewed the subject in correspondence with Mr. E.—, and with many thanks availed myself of his tempting offer.

It was settled that my departure should be towards the end of the following spring, so as to enable me to meet Sir

George in Canada, in time to accompany him thence in his annual journey to Fort Garry, the capital of the Red River Settlement. This place was to be the base of my own independent expedition to the plains and mountains of the Far West.

On the *15th of April* 1859 I sailed from Liverpool in the Cunard steamer *Africa*, then under the command of Captain Anderson.* She was a paddle-wheel vessel, and, though not fast, had the merit of being more steady in a rolling sea than screw-steamers usually are. However, I was not sorry to leave her, when, on the afternoon of the 28th, we made our arrival at New York.

I found myself most comfortable at the Brevoort House, an excellent hotel in Fifth Avenue, recommended to me by Mr. K——, a fellow-passenger, to whose kindness I was in many ways indebted; but I did not linger long in the bustling city, though very hospitably treated there, having little business to detain me, and being anxious to make sure of reaching Lachine before Sir George's departure, no certain date having been fixed for the commencement of his official journey. I resolved, however, that nothing should prevent me from visiting Niagara; and in adopting this plan I gained the advantage of companionship for part of my way, by travelling thus far with Captain Anderson of the *Africa*, who had some little time to occupy before his return voyage, and was glad to employ it by joining me in an expedition to the Falls.

Monday, May 2d.—We set out at an early hour, making our journey by the Erie line, which, after some consideration,

* Now Sir James Anderson; knighted for his services in connection with the laying of the Atlantic cable, when captain of the *Great Eastern*, in 1865.

we had chosen in preference to the Hudson River route. I know not if we judged rightly, but at the time we saw no reason whatever to regret our choice. 'The Erie line is very beautiful'—so runs my journal. . . . 'I stood on the platform outside the carriage for more than an hour, as we went up the Delaware vale, where the scenery is lovely—river, rock, and hill, and endless forest, broken only along the water-side by settlements and partial clearings.

'After leaving Elmira we came to the Seneca Lake,—long and narrow, like a vast river, with its clear blue water bounded by hills displaying well-arranged farms, mingled with woodlands so skilfully disposed by nature as to seem as if placed by the hand of some wonderful landscape-gardener. The sun shone gloriously, and I thought that a more enchanting scene of placid, smiling loveliness had never met my eyes.'

May 3d.—Having passed the previous night at Rochester, the farthest point the trains enabled us to reach, we only arrived at Niagara about 11 o'clock. The Clifton Hotel was not open, so we took rooms at the Monteaale, a newly-established hotel near the Suspension Bridge, and then set forth on our expedition to behold the wonders of the mighty cataract.

'We looked down from Table Rock, we climbed under the Canadian Fall, we visited the burning well, crossed over at the ferry, stood at the foot of the American Fall, explored Goat Island, and ascended Prospect Tower. . . . As to the Falls themselves, I was neither greatly astonished nor much disappointed. Guided by drawings and descriptions, I had imagined beforehand something very near the reality, except that the width was greater and the height less than I had expected. I have now seen the famous Niagara,

and honestly confess it would give me little concern never to see it again. It is too huge, and the disgustingly obtrusive civilisation that crawls over its sides turns my very heart sick. A small name on a map is more easily found than one in letters of excessive size, and so a narrower, higher cataract would strike more sharply on the mental vision, than low-statured, wide-spreading Niagara. Seneca Lake is more lovely and lovable than an endless stretch of becalmed ocean. Be it not supposed that I felt no delight in the beauty and grandeur of the noble cataract. No one could fail to be impressed in beholding an object so sublime, but the impression rests rather on the mind than in the heart.

‘Besides the other drawbacks, the rock formation at and near the Fall is poor both in colour and outline: but it is the all-pervading vulgarism which surrounds it that makes the whole scene distasteful to me—so far as such is the case. The Canadian side is not strikingly offensive, but the American side teems with glaring wooden structures hanging over the very precipice, down which, moreover, a staircase enclosed in a hideous wooden box conducts the public to the ferry-boat, or to a small steamer which fizzes about as close to the cataract as it dares to go. Some wretched person has built a mock ruin on a little island that actually overhangs the Fall.’

May 4th.—I took leave of my companion, and going on alone by rail to Kingston, on Lake Ontario, and thence by steamer down the St. Lawrence, I arrived at Lachine in good time on the evening of the following day.

Sir George Simpson welcomed me very cordially to Hudson’s Bay House, where a room was put at my disposal; and in this large, plain, comfortable dwelling, I passed the next three days, which were made most agreeable to me by the hospitable attentions of Mr. and Mrs. Mackenzie, then

permanently resident at that Post. I also received much kindness, in various ways, from many different quarters.

Monday, May 9th.—We fairly set out on our journey towards the distant regions of the west, making our departure from Lachine about 6 A.M., by the early morning train. The party consisted of Sir George Simpson; Mr. Hopkins, his secretary; and Mr. Cameron, an officer in the Company's service,—who was only going with us to St. Paul. Our attendants were four in number—James Murray, Sir George's servant, a Shetlander; my own man, Duncan Robertson, a Perthshire highlander, who acted as one of my gamekeepers when at home in Scotland; lastly, Baptist and Toma, two Iroquois voyageurs, who had been constantly employed as Sir George's canoe-men on his previous expeditions to Red River by the usual Canadian route.

That night we slept at Toronto, where, at the Rossin Hotel, we were met by Mr. Kane, author of *The Wanderings of an Artist in North America*, also by Dr. Rae, the well known Arctic explorer.* The latter was to travel with

* I cannot resist the temptation to quote the following most appropriately worded passages from a very interesting and graphic volume published in 1848.—“The stranger introduced himself as Dr. Rae. He was on his way to York Factory for the purpose of fitting out at that port an expedition for the survey of the small part of the North American coast left unexplored by Messrs. Dease and Simpson, which will then prove beyond a doubt whether or not there is a communication by water between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans round the north of America. Dr. Rae appeared to be just the man for such an expedition. He was very muscular and active, full of animal spirits, and had a fine intellectual countenance. He was considered, by those who knew him well, to be one of the best snow-shoe walkers in the [H. B. Co.'s] Service, was also an excellent rifle shot, and could stand an immense amount of fatigue . . . There is every reason to believe that this expedition will be successful.” In a footnote, the writer adds—“Since this sheet was prepared for press, I have heard of the return of Dr. Rae from his successful discoveries.”—BALLANTYNE, *Hudson's Bay*, p. 225.

us on the following day, but only as far as Hamilton; he hoped, however, to join us afterwards at St. Paul, and thence accompany our party to Red River.

Having passed Tuesday night at Detroit, we set off for Chicago by morning train on the 11th.—‘A very fine hot day. The trees, which in the easterly Canadian districts were leafless, are here half covered with foliage. The farther west we go, the finer seems the land and the more flourishing the towns. A few western-looking men got into the train,—tall, powerful, active, of the lymphatic-sanguine type. Each carried a long rifle, and wore a wallet on his back. Fine cattle (like Herefords) to be seen after crossing into the States. . . .

‘Chicago is a finely built town of 120,000 inhabitants. It is situated on Lake Michigan—a true inland sea. To-day the water was smooth as a mirror, and of a beautiful colour between blue, green, and grey. While taking a sherry-cobbler at the bar of the Richmond Hotel, I talked to the German who keeps the cigar store there. He tells me there are from 30,000 to 40,000 Germans in this town; but, for his part, he says, he wishes he were back in Hanover.’

May 12th.—Leaving Chicago in the morning, we travelled by way of Madison and Prairie du Chien, and embarking in the Milwaukie steamer, pursued our journey up the stream of the Mississippi River.—‘The country after leaving the Chicago prairie is undulating: of limestone formation, producing stunted oak instead of the pine and soft deciduous wood of Canada. The snake-fence is less common here, and owing to its absence, and the use of plain post and rail instead, also to the prevalence of oak copses, the landscape looks far more English. The whole country is now much flooded, the water being higher than has been known since (I think) 1826. Sir

George doubts if we shall be able to get on beyond St. Paul,—it will be a wet ride at all events. The Mississippi was in high flood, submerging most of the willows that grow on its banks, which themselves are a series of picturesquely wooded hills, with horizontal strata of limestone rock cropping out here and there.'

We arrived at St. Paul, the chief town of Minnesota, at 11 P.M. on Friday the 13th, and put up at the Fuller House, an immense but not uncomfortable hotel of the regular American type.

May 14th.—Sir George was made so uneasy by continued rumours that the country beyond Crow-wing was impassably inundated, a notion which the flooded state of the Mississippi seemed to confirm, that he began to talk of returning, and canoeing it as usual by Lake Superior, instead of attempting the new route. We hardly supposed him in earnest, and at any rate expected to stay a few days longer, on the chance of the arrival of the Red River men who were bringing us carts and horses from Fort Garry; to our great surprise, however, he suddenly announced his resolve to set out that very afternoon, giving us only three hours to complete our preparations. He had heard that Kitson, an American fur-trader, whose party had left just two days before for the north, was still halted at Crow-wing, about 130 miles distant, and, dreading the floods, it was his intention to try to overtake him, so as to get help from his people in crossing the many swamps and rivers that lay in our road.

So early a start was most inconvenient to all of us, for we had reckoned on time to make a few necessary purchases.

I was by far the chief sufferer, having much to provide myself with for my long future journey;—I wanted to buy horses, I required a waggon and double harness, and various

other things not likely to be got so well, if at all, elsewhere. My guns and saddle too, which were on their way from Canada in bond, had not yet arrived,—but there was no help for it, we were all bound to obey our leader, even if we thought his decisions doubtful or mistaken.

At 3 P.M., accordingly, we all set out in a roughly built, but light and easy waggon and four, with ranges of seats in the *char-a-banc* fashion, and a stout canvas tilt and curtains protecting us around and overhead. Our journey, however, was destined to a speedy finish, for on reaching St. Anthony, after a seven-mile stage, the first person who greeted us was James M'Kay, the leader of the party we had been expecting from Red River. His report was reassuring: he had found the country everywhere passable, the roads in good order, and the swamps tolerably free from water, though the rivers were unusually swollen. There was nothing, in short, to stop our journey, and no reason to anticipate serious difficulty or delay.

On hearing this, Sir George, who had full confidence in M'Kay's judgment, at once decided to go back; there being now no object in joining Kitson, who, as matters had turned out, was probably by that time well on his way; so we gladly stepped into the waggon again, and returned to our old quarters at St. Paul.

James M'Kay accompanied us. His appearance greatly interested me, both from his own personal advantages, and because he was the first Red River man that I had yet beheld. A Scotsman, though with Indian blood on the mother's side, he was born and bred in the Saskatchewan country, but afterwards became a resident near Fort Garry, and entered the Company's employ. Whether as guide or hunter, he was universally reckoned one of their best men.

Immensely broad-chested and muscular, though not tall, he weighed eighteen stone; yet in spite of his stoutness he was exceedingly hardy and active, and a wonderful horseman.

‘His face—somewhat Assyrian in type—is very handsome: short, delicate, aquiline nose; piercing dark grey eyes; long dark-brown hair, beard, and moustaches; white, small, regular teeth; skin tanned to red bronze from exposure to weather. He was dressed in Red River style—a blue cloth “capot” (hooded frock-coat) with brass buttons; red-and-black flannel shirt, which served also for waistcoat; black belt round the waist; buff leather moccasins on his feet; trousers of brown and white striped home-made woollen stuff.’

I had never come across a wearer of moccasins before, and it amused me to watch this grand and massive man pacing the hotel corridors with noiseless footfall, while excitable little Yankees in shiny boots creaked and stamped about like so many busy steam-engines.

At St. Anthony we also met Captain Blakiston, of the Royal Artillery, who had arrived with M'Kay, on his return from the Government Exploring Expedition, in which he had been associated with Captain Palliser. He, likewise, was for the most part dressed in Red River fashion, and bore very evident traces of two years' severe work in the far west. There was another important addition to our party that evening—Dr. Rae, who had fortunately found himself able to carry out his intention of joining us. We were now to be fellow-travellers, as far at any rate as Fort Garry.

Monday, May 16th.—After trying a number of horses, of all sorts and kinds, belonging to various owners, I bought from the Messrs. Burbank a pair of large stout brown waggon-ponies, for which I paid about £70 in dollars; also a very

good young bay horse of the same description, but larger, being $15\frac{1}{2}$ hands high, for about 40 guineas. I succeeded in getting an excellent new hickory waggon, light and strong, for £17, and a useful second-hand set of waggon harness, also at a sufficiently reasonable price. With some searching I then discovered a saddle of the English shape, very badly made in every respect, but I was glad to buy it for £5, for it was the only one to be heard of. Elsewhere there were only Spanish saddles, than which no more detestable invention can be imagined. The rider might as well attempt to sit inside a pitchfork.

I was more fortunate in my next purchase, consisting of a pair of exceedingly handsome ponies, a little under 14 hands in height, which I bought for about £30 apiece. Both of them were Vermont bred, and having been regularly driven together by their former owner during long excursions in the forests, they had become great friends, and were never happy when parted from each other's society. The slighter one, a quiet, thoroughbred-looking bright bay, with very small and peculiar ears, I called Vermont, from the place of his nativity; the other, a dark-brown, with black points and a white blaze on his front face,—a noble little horse with most splendid action, as gentle as a lamb, but full of fire and spirit,—I named Morgan, after the celebrated breed from which he came. The brown waggon-horses, it was settled, were to be thenceforth known as Paul and Anthony, the young bay horse as Don.

May 17th.—Sir George, Hopkins, and I, made an expedition to see the Minnehaha Falls, which had become so celebrated through Longfellow's beautiful poem. Our drive was pleasant in itself, but disappointing as regarded its main object, for the river—which bounds in one clear shoot over a limestone rock some 50 feet in height—is a very insigni-

ficant stream, although at its fullest at the time we saw it. The scene is pretty, but no more ; it would have little interest were it not associated with Hiawatha's story.



MINNEHAHA FALLS.

May 18th.—Off at last. We travelled in the same hired char-a-banc with canvas tilt, the "stage" in which we made our former fruitless journey to St. Anthony. Our road led up the course of the Mississippi, through flat uninteresting prairies, over which we jolted for many a weary hour till we reached Saux Rapids, where we took up our night's abode at the Hyperborean Hotel. The landlord, a Canadian with a Scottish wife, was a very good-humoured obliging host ; he and his exerted themselves for our comfort with much zeal and energy.

After dinner I tried a well-bred, handsome horse, highly

praised by his owner, and spoken of as likely to answer well for buffalo-running. He was fast enough, certainly, but both awkward and restive, so I did not buy him, though rather advised to do so, rightly supposing that a half-broke animal would add too much to the difficulties of an unfamiliar sport.

May 19th.—The next day's travelling, still over level plains only partially settled, brought us to Crow-wing, a village of no great size, where we took our final leave of the stage-waggon, as we descended from it at the door of Morrison's Inn. Awaiting us there we found James M'Kay, with everything arranged and ready for a start next morning at the earliest signs of dawn.

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CHAPTER II.

CROW-WING TO FORT GARRY.

MAY 20th.—Our night was one of restlessness and broken slumbers, through the inroad of every hateful tormentor. Little mattered such annoyances! At daybreak we left all troubles behind us, mounted our good steeds, and made a fair, auspicious start for the wilderness, the forest, and the plains. What gladness swelled within my heart—oh! never shall I forget it—as I felt the gallant little Morgan bounding and dancing beneath me, scarce able to control himself for joy, while we passed through the pleasant woods on that lovely summer morning, when all nature seemed so fresh and beautiful and sweet. At last, thought I, at last, the prisoner of civilisation is free!

Dr. Rae rode at my side on well-bred handsome Vermont. Sir George, who was in but indifferent health, travelled by himself in a light Canadian cart, which was furnished with curtains and a canopy on poles. The Iroquois Toma drove Paul and Anthony in my waggon; Short, a Scotch half-breed, conducted the Red River cart, a stout two-wheeled vehicle of the toughest quality though entirely made of wood, wheels, body, shafts, and all, being fitted together without a single particle of iron. The other men rode; and the spare horses, of which M'Kay had brought a considerable number, ran freely alongside and never attempted to stray from their companions.

On leaving Crow-wing we crossed the Mississippi in a large flat barge, of the sort known as a "scow," which took over the horses and vehicles as well as ourselves and our baggage. After this the road became a mere rough track. For some time, however, it ran through a pine forest, in many parts of noticeable growth, and was tolerably sound and hard, though intersected by a few trifling swamps.

About 12 o'clock we halted for breakfast—not a moment too soon in any one's opinion, for we had been about seven hours on horseback,—and did great justice to eggs and bacon, biscuits and butter, accompanied with the universal drink of the Company's service—remarkably excellent tea. This mid-day halt is but seldom a long one; we were soon again on the road. The swampy places grew more frequent and troublesome, till at length, at "Miry Creek," we were obliged to stop and make a portage,—that is to say, to transfer all the baggage from the carts to the shoulders of the men, who carried it across the swamp, while the lightened vehicles were dragged through as could best be managed. I witnessed this operation for the first time, and was astonished at the strength and hardiness of our practised voyageurs. M'Kay in particular showed the most wonderful energy. Up to his waist or chest in the clinging mud or the sluggish black water of the creek, now passing heavy packages across, now dragging reluctant animals through the mire, all came alike to him, and his cheerfulness never flagged.

This portage delayed us more than an hour. Soon afterwards we had to make another over Swan Creek, a swollen brook, but as there was no mire we managed this easily by means of an india-rubber canoe. By that time it was nearly 8 o'clock, so M'Kay decided to halt, and at once led us to an excellent camping place, where a grove of fine Scots firs

stood in scattered groups upon an elevated sandy flat, near which flowed with calm but powerful sweep the broad and swollen stream of the Crow-wing River.*

The weary horses were set free, tents pitched, wood cut, fires lighted. Our simple supper was soon prepared and soon discussed, then came a few minutes devoted to conversation and the pipe or cigar, and then to bed. Our tents were of the sort generally known as "boat-tents," about six feet square inside, and six feet high to the ridge. Two upright poles supported another, longitudinally set, over which the canvas passed, so that the whole looked like a small straight-sided cottage, with the entry at one end. About two feet from the ground the slope of the roof ceased, and canvas flaps went straight downwards till they reached the earth, when their ends were turned in and placed under an oil-cloth flooring which kept all compact and dry.

Sir George and Hopkins occupied one of the tents, Dr. Rae and I shared the other. We wrapped ourselves in our blankets, and my companion was soon asleep. For my own part, this first night under canvas was far from agreeable to one so lately somewhat of an invalid. A keen frost struck upwards and downwards through the blankets, making sleep difficult, and troops of Whip-poor-wills and other nightbirds shrieked with a maddening persistency that made it nearly impossible. After many hours some broken slumber came at last, and, thanks to the pureness of the air, I rose up tolerably fresh and ready for action when the summons awakened our silent camp at daybreak.

May 21st.—Though sunny all the day it was exceedingly cold, an icy north wind encountering us as we went, and

* "The Ojibwa name for this stream is *Kag-aug-c-we-gwon*, meaning *Crow's Feather*."—SCHOOLCRAFT, *Ind. Tribes of Un. States*, vol. ii. 157.

chilling us to the very bone. In distance our march was much the same as that of the previous day—about five-and-thirty miles, but it was far less interesting, being almost entirely over an untimbered plain of poor quality, covered in many parts with an extensive growth of brushwood.

I tried Don for the morning march, but he was so rough in his paces, that my right knee (tender since a balloon accident in 1848) began to be painful, and I resolved never to ride that horse again. After this he took his turn at the cart; he proved too young and unseasoned, however, for much hard work, so I finally disposed of him at Fort Garry.

Dr. Rae and M'Kay walked forward with their guns before the whole party started, and, keeping well in front, they picked up some prairie fowls,* ducks, and plovers, which

* Common and widely diffused as the Prairie-Hen seems to be, some confusion apparently exists among naturalists in regard to it. Of all the Tetraonidae, as described by Dr. Richardson and Mr. Swainson in the *Fauna Boreali-Americana*, there is only one species (besides the *Ruffed Grouse*—*Tetrao umbellus*) in the least answering to the Prairie-fowl, viz. *Tetrao (centrocercus) phasianellus*—*The Sharp-tailed Grouse* (length of male 20 inches), which I rather believe to be the bird in question. In the Zoological Appendix to Sir John Franklin's Narrative, ann. 1823 (p. 680), by Mr. Sabine, there is also no detailed description of any other nearly corresponding species; but under the heading *Tetrao umbellus*—*Ruffed Grouse*, the author writes:—"This species is an inhabitant of wooded countries only, in which it differs from the *Pinnated Grouse* of America, *Tetrao cupido*, better known under the appellation of the *Prairie Hen* or *Heath Hen*." Under the heading *Tetrao phasianellus*—*Sharp-tailed Grouse*, the same author states, that Linnæus at first called that bird *T. phasianellus*, but afterwards made it a variety of *T. urogallus*; "and that subsequent experience has proved that the first opinion was correct."

In the *Naturalist's Library*, edited by Sir William Jardine (vol. iv. p. 130), two closely allied species are described besides the *Ruffed Grouse*, viz. —*The Pinnated Grouse*—*Tetrao cupido* (which is quoted as Linnæus's designation of it), and the *Sharp-tailed Grouse*—*Tetrao phasianellus*, the adult male of which is described as being "as large as" the *Ruffed Grouse*, viz. about

we boiled with rice at supper, to the great improvement of our former fare.

We camped near Leaf Lake, whose shores were the site of a "c j" which consisted of two wooden huts.

The following day (*Sunday, May 22d*) was very warm and fine, and travelling became altogether more agreeable, for the road now took us through a pretty and varied country abounding in woods and lakes.

In the morning we came across two or three Ojibways, the first of whom was no favourable specimen,—a miserable object, half naked and quite drunk, a bloated, disgusting savage. These Indians seemed peaceable and harmless eighteen inches. Major Ross King, however (*The Sportsman and Naturalist in Canada*, ann. 1866—p. 143), only seems to recognise one bird of the kind in addition to the Ruffed Grouse, viz. *The Prairie Hen—Cupidonia cupido*, and he describes the male as "averaging nearly three pounds avoirdupois in weight, not far from that of an ordinary Cock Pheasant" (about double the weight of an average Scottish Grouse), and as "measuring about nineteen inches in length," which approaches the length assigned by Dr. Richardson to the *Tetrao phasianellus*—viz. twenty inches. Mr. Hind, referring to the Prairie-fowl in the Roseau district, not very far from Red River, designates them *Tetrao cupido* (*Canadian Red River Exploring Expedition*, vol. i. p. 160).

Amidst this conflict of authorities it is hard to decide, and I can form no opinion as to whether or not the Sharp-tailed Grouse and the Pinnated Grouse are distinct. If, though distinct, they are closely-allied varieties, it is possible I may have shot specimens of both without observing the difference. I am disposed, however, to think that the birds we so constantly met with more resembled in size the former than the latter. My men used to speak of them as "Pheasants;" and, all things considered, I incline to identify them with Dr. Richardson's "*Tetrao phasianellus*;"—"Awkiscow—Cree Indians; Pheasant—Hudson's Bay residents."—(*Faun. Bor. Am.* vol. ii. p. 361).

Otherwise, one is forced to the strange conclusion that one of the commonest birds in the Hudson's Bay Territories has been omitted from a book expressly relating to the zoology of that country,—a work prepared by several distinguished naturalists, among whom Dr. Richardson, at any rate, was intimately acquainted with those northern parts of America, having been engaged in both of Sir John Franklin's overland expeditions.

enough, but we presently fell in with a very dangerous party of the same tribe.

We were just entering a fine level prairie, which stretched a good twelve miles to the front, when we noticed a band of armed Indians posted on a mound that commanded the road. They evidently expected us, for one of them instantly ran to intercept Hopkins and M'Kay, who were riding foremost, threw himself in their way, and tried hard to stop them, loudly clamouring for presents.

Sir George called to us to go on. We pressed forward. At that moment the Indian made a spring, and clutched at M'Kay's rein ; but the latter very quickly got rid of him, seizing the fellow's hand in such a gripe that he danced with pain and astonishment, and went staggering to the other side of the track.

Another Indian snatched at the wheel of Sir George's cart, but failed to keep his hold ; and as we went steadily onwards, the villains thought better of it, and let us pursue our course, but before we had gone fifty yards they had the insolence to fire a bullet over our heads ; then the whole band began to shout and make grossly insulting gestures. Such impertinence was hard to bear, and some of us felt inclined to turn back and try conclusions with them ; Sir George, however, begged us not to notice their insults, pointing out that any injury received at our hands would only be revenged upon future travellers. He might have added that we should certainly have got the worst of it, the enemy being more numerous and twice as well armed.

It was fortunate that we were a rather strong-looking party, for these Indians were of an Ojibway band called "Les Pillageurs,"* notorious for their daring rascality. As

* "The name of The Pillagers, or *Muk-un-dua-win-in-c-wug*, pillage-men,

recently as the foregoing year they had wantonly shot two horses belonging to some Red River half-breeds who happened to be passing along that already much-frequented track.

Later in the day we crossed Little Red River, and in course of the afternoon traversed another considerable prairie, covered all over with the long, withered herbage of the by-gone season. Taking no heed of this store of inflammable stuff, I carelessly threw away a match with which I had been lighting my meerschaum; in an instant the prairie was in a blaze. The wind speedily bore the flames away from us, and ere long the conflagration raged far and wide. I never heard to what extent it spread, but for hours afterwards we could see its lurid glow illuminating the darkness of the distant horizon.

Morgan carried me beautifully the whole forty miles of the march, and came in as fresh as when he started. He was quiet and gentle, spirited and handsome, perfect in all his paces; a more charming pony it would be impossible to imagine.

A few early mosquitoes showed themselves, the pioneers of the coming legions—ill-omened sight!

May 23d.—We started at 4 A.M., and rode till 9, passing

was given to them by their fellow Ojibwas and whites, on account of their having taken away the goods of a trader about eighty years ago [about 1770], at the mouth of a creek still known as Pillage Creek, emptying into the Crow-Wing river. The band is also noted for their wildness, and as having on several later occasions acted to the letter of their name in their dealings with traders and missionaries. . . . Of the Pillagers, when you ask them who were their most noted warriors and men, the answer is—'They all fought alike; not one of our fathers passed through life without seeing the shedding of blood.'"—SCHOOLCRAFT, *Report on the Indian Tribes of the United States*, vol. ii., 153, 165.

for three hours through a wood of fine maples, ironwood, and brush, not unlike an English forest in appearance. While traversing its bounds the Red River cart upset, but it was raised again, without injury either to that stout vehicle, or to Don, who was in the shafts at the time.

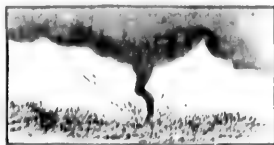
After this we emerged on the banks of Lake Forty-four (so called from the date of the discovery of this route), a fine sheet of the clearest water, enlivened by the whiteness of a flock of swimming and wading pelicans. We had meant to halt for breakfast near the lake, but were completely put to rout by clouds of minute flies, actually dense enough to choke up the horses' nostrils, so we rode on for some miles farther, to the next convenient halting-place.

Here mischance continued to follow us ; for our breakfast fire, being carelessly lighted, began to spread along the grass, and in a few minutes the wind, taking a sudden turn, blew all the smoke and sparks into our faces, obliging us to make a rapid retreat into the part already consumed. The grass being short and crisp on the barren eminence where we had posted ourselves, the line of flame never rose much above a foot from the ground, yet we had hard work to beat it out, and could scarcely force or persuade the horses to cross that really insignificant obstacle.

We now began to ascend to a higher level, and coming at length to the top of an ascent, a most glorious landscape opened full upon our view. Far as the eye could reach swept one enormous plain, its vast extent diversified by the winding courses of the Red River and the Shayenne, and of many a smaller stream, whose meanderings could be traced by the trees that clung along their sides in a distinct though narrow border.

The day had become intensely hot, it was difficult to

breathe, one felt almost ready to faint. Thunder was peeling and lightning flashing in different parts of the sky, but far distant from us. Suddenly a phenomenon displayed itself on the south-west horizon—a waterspout of gigantic size and singular appearance. Its thin and lofty stem was surmounted by a far-spreading cloud of inky blackness; at the base of the column torrents dashed upon the earth, rebounding in fountain-like masses of silvery spray. This grand and uncommon spectacle continued for a quarter of an hour, then it began to dissolve away, and slowly faded into nothingness.



WATERSPOUT.

May 24th.—An amusing though unpleasant incident happened in the night. Duncan, who was but a novice in the art of encamping, had thoughtlessly set the flaps of my tent over the oil-cloth floor instead of under it, as he should have done,—a mistake which unluckily passed unobserved, for it was hardly perceptible when the blankets were laid down. Towards midnight I suddenly awoke, and found myself in a pool of water. A violent thunderstorm was raging, rain beating furiously on the canvas, and entering beneath the unfastened flaps; whole floods streaming in and flowing round my back and shoulders. The darkness was intense. I managed to light a candle, and gazing on the cheerless scene discovered that my own side of the tent was completely inundated; it lay low, and the oil-cloth, instead of running the water off, had made itself into a reservoir for my benefit. The other side was better situated, being on higher ground, and there I beheld my companion, Dr. Rae, sound asleep, as yet undisturbed by the tide, which only encroached upon his

feet and ankles. He slept quietly on, till in an hour or two the gradually rising water awoke him.

Little could be done until daylight, but I improved matters by turning my india-rubber bath bottom upwards, with a pillow on the top of it, so as to form an island; on which I seated myself, after drawing a waterproof over my soaking shirt, and passed away the time in writing up my journal.

By 6 o'clock the rain had ceased. I escaped from the chilly tent, and, much to my satisfaction, found M'Kay in the act of kindling a fire, on a dry open piece of ground a few yards distant. Having extemporised a hut of branches covered with an oil-skin, he had passed a tolerable night; the men, too, had been pretty well sheltered beneath the carts and waggon, and Sir George and Hopkins had slept very comfortably in their well-pitched tent.

May 25th.—Owing to rain and mist we had marched but five miles on the previous day, M'Kay disliking to travel in wet weather, on account of the injury that damp occasions to soft leather harness. To make up, we rode twenty miles, without a halt, that bitterly cold, raw, east-windy morning, only stopping when we reached the flooded stream of the Rice River.

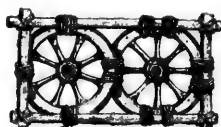
After breakfast we drove the horses across, while M'Kay built an ingenious scow by stretching our largest oil-skin over the wheels of the cart. These ironless wheels have a great outward set, so that when taken off and laid on their naves the level of the tires rests a foot or more above that of the ground. Two of them being placed side by side on the oil-cloth, were firmly tied together; four poles were then lashed to each other so as to form an oblong, and this being fastened upon the wheels, and the oil-skin beneath (A A A) drawn up and attached to it, a strong and buoyant scow was the result,

the wheels being at once framework and platform, while the poles made a steady gunwale for the paddles to work on.—‘The luggage and the vehicles were safely and speedily ferried over, M’Kay, as usual, wading about waist-deep, active and ready beyond imagination. . . . After this we had a most weary ride over a long plain, recently

burned and quite black, and so soft from the heavy rains that the horses went fetlock-deep at every step, sometimes sinking to the very hocks. Every brook was a river, every swamp a lake, the road a swamp. A cold steam rose from the soaked earth, our spirits were damped, the jaded horses plodded heavily on. . . . The journey seemed endless, for we could not find a good camping-place, but at length we settled down near a stream between Rice and Sand-hill Rivers.’

Having borrowed a gun, I went forward while a portage was making over a small but deep little river, and shot a few ducks, as well as a prairie-fowl. I felt somewhat pleased in also shooting two bitterns, but my friends objected to them for supper, on account of their frog-devouring propensities. Remembering a highly-approved dish in the refreshment-room at Toronto, it struck me that if we ate frogs ourselves we need not object to birds that did no worse. The bitterns, however, were vetoed on this occasion. I often ate them afterwards, and agree with our forefathers in thinking them excellent food.

May 26th.—After breakfasting on the pretty banks of the Sand-hill River, at a place where sandy elevations were



CART-WHEEL SCOW.

covered with scattered trees, we forded its shallow stream and passed the baggage across in M'Kay's oil-skin scow.

From this point the track improved, for it quitted the low moist plains, and ran along at a higher level on a dry and wholesome prairie.

In the afternoon we observed a small black bear questing about in the distance, whereupon M'Kay, with his wonderful art of making all horses go, immediately coaxed a gallop out of the wretched lame pony he was riding, and "ran" the bear, as the phrase is. A black pointer, named Blucher, joined zealously in the chase, turning the beast several times and worrying at his hind legs; the coward, however, showed no signs of fight, though twice as big as his enemy, and M'Kay presently came up and shot him through the heart.

This two-year-old bear was miserably thin and ragged. He seemed to have been in straits for food, for there was nothing in his stomach more nourishing than ants, many of them alive and active; he had positively swallowed the whole nest—moss, earth, insects, and all. We varied our supper with bear-steaks that night. I thought them particularly nasty,—lean, coarse, and rank-smelling; perhaps, however, this was attributable to the animal's want of condition, for fat bear is spoken of as one of the best of things.

All night long the wolves made doleful music in the wood on the other side of Red Lake River. This deep wide stream rolled on in heavy flood a few yards below the willows that sheltered our tents, and as I watched its swift and turbid current, I could not but wish that everything were safe across.

May 27th.—The crossing of the Red Lake River occupied us till 12 o'clock. M'Kay and Toma began by launching the india-rubber canoe and leading one of the horses over;

the rest took the water after a little pushing and driving, and all got safely to the other side. The baggage was then ferried across in an oil-skin scow, which we towed backwards and forwards by means of two ropes.

Then came a hard march of twenty-six miles without a halt, mostly along a high gravelly bank of singular character, with swamps on either hand. Here, to our surprise, we beheld a tradesmanlike man walking towards us all alone. He proved to be an American pedlar, who, with true Yankee independence, was returning companionless on foot after the disposal of all his cargo at Fort Garry. Excepting the knife in his pocket he was without a weapon, and there was but little in the small provision-bag he carried on his back. We wondered how he would contrive to pass the Red Lake River, which is the worst difficulty in the whole 428 miles of the journey to Crow-wing. I believe that he waited till another party came up, and crossed with their assistance.

For the first time the mosquitoes appeared in force. Not expecting them, I had no gloves with me, and, in spite of constant watchfulness, my hands were excessively bitten, and so empoisoned that they swelled up and grew very painful, such feverishness succeeding as to prevent me from sleeping for the whole of the following night. I never again suffered so much in this way, for the blood gets by degrees accustomed to the venom of the bites,—there is less inflammation afterwards, though quite as much annoyance at the moment.

May 28th.—We breakfasted early this morning, after scowing across Snake-hill River, so I borrowed a gun and went forward in hopes of picking up some game. In this I was disappointed, and had more than enough of deep wading through flooded creeks; but the beauty and freshness of the

morning, and the exquisite singing of thousands of little birds in the bushes and poplar groves, amply made up to me for all. My bag, however, was not quite an empty one, for while waiting at Pine River for the arrival of the carts, I stalked and shot some pigeons that had settled among the higher trees up and down the course of the stream.

They were exceedingly pretty birds, rather larger than turtle-doves, bluish in colour, and chiefly differing from the common pigeon in the pheasant-like length of their pointed tails. We often heard their peevish scream, but, from their wildness, could not succeed in getting many of them.*

Towards afternoon we came to a miserable country, swamp following swamp, and at length we got entangled in one of such depth, that poor Don, who was dragging the cart through it, fairly sat down on his haunches, and I thought we should never be able to move him.

'The frogs, as usual, never ceased their chirping and croaking uproar; cranes were very numerous, uttering continually their doleful, throat-gargling cry, a sound only surpassed in wretchedness by the shrieks of the ungreased cart-wheels, which moaned and screamed like a discontented panther.'

Sunday, May 29th.—The horses strayed, and delayed us more than half-an-hour, but we made our start at 5 A.M., and were as far as the first of the Deux Rivieres by our usual dinner-time. Previously to this we had been traversing a rich but bare and level prairie of many miles' extent.—'It is strange to find oneself on an apparently flat disc of grass, nothing but grass meeting the plain horizon-line all around. One feels as if crawling about in view of high Heaven on a

* *Columba (Ectopistes) Migratoria, Passenger Pigeon. Mimewuck*—Cree Indians.—RICHARDSON, *Faun. Bor.-Am.*, vol. ii. p. 363.

circular table punched out from the world and stuck on a spike.

'A lovely sunny day, and not too hot. . . . We crossed the river without accident, thanks to M'Kay's skill and activity, and camped on the banks of the second of the Deux Rivières.'

May 30th.—There was a break in our journey through the wilderness when early that afternoon we arrived at Pembina, near the boundary of the British territories, 'a small and straggling place, not worthy to be called a village,' and established ourselves at the Company's fort, then under charge of Mr. M'Intosh. By Sir George's directions all sorts of good things were specially provided for our dinner. A calf was killed for the occasion, Gold-Eye fish were procured,—in short, we were treated to a most excellent meal, doubly welcome to us after the rough fare of the preceding week; which had been little but salt pork, with the addition of such pigeons, curlews, ducks, and plovers, as we had managed to pick up by the way.

Our quiet was too soon interrupted by the uproar of a large band of *Saulteaux*,* who came and fired salutes close by in honour of the Governor's arrival. This meant the usual thing—presents; but Sir George gave them little encouragement, probably not choosing to countenance irregular demands from natives in trade relations with the Company, especially as he was travelling for the first time by this rather recently developed Minnesota route.

* Or *Salteurs*, or *Sotoos*,—one of the branches of the Ojibway tribe, so named from their residence having been near the Sault St. Marie. — *V. FRANKLIN, Journey to the Polar Sea, in the Years 1819-22*, p. 63. Mr. Kane thus writes on the subject:—"The *Saulteaux* are a band of the great Ojibbeway nation, both words signifying 'the Jumpers,' and I derive the name from their expertness in leaping their canoes over the numerous rapids which occur in the rivers of their vicinity."—*Wanderings of an Artist*, p. 82.

I was disappointed in these Indians. They too much resembled commonplace Europeans, southerners in aspect, northerners in the forms and materials of their clothing—'by no means fine-looking men, but picturesque with their green or scarlet blankets, and their long, streaming, coal-black hair.'

May 31st.—Our road was mostly over vast rich plains, and the only incident of the day was the passage of the Vieux Marais, a horribly swampy creek, which from its depth offered a serious obstacle, although only a few yards wide. It was necessary to take the trouble of unharnessing, and pushing or hauling the carts across, after a previous portage of the baggage. The men carried us all over. M'Kay took Sir George, but I was quite as well placed on Toma's powerful back, though even he had enough to do in wading this deep and treacherous morass.

We were furnished with a strange lot of horses to-day, which had been taken from the Company's Pembina establishment to relieve our own jaded animals. Hopkins rode a showy, skew-bald, Roman-nosed pony, a buffalo-runner of some repute, but whose chief accomplishment seemed to consist in stumbling, which he climaxed by a sudden fall on his head.

My steed was much more remarkable, being a true specimen of the "woolly" horse, his soft dun hair covering him in close curls like the fleece of a Leicester sheep. He had been brought from the Columbia River country, where a breed of that kind is said to exist.

June 1st.—We had heavy rain and thunder at night, but kept all dry in our tents, with one trifling exception. It cleared up for a few minutes between 4 and 5 A.M., so we set out on our march; rain, however, came on again, and lasted nearly four hours.

We breakfasted at the house of a settler named D——, who lived with his family in great apparent comfort in that small log cottage, and farmed on a moderate scale, owning sixty head of cattle, and cultivating a few acres of land.

After taking leave of Mr. D—— we crossed the Red River in a ferry-boat, and riding forward at a good pace, in two hours or so we found ourselves opposite Fort Garry.

Placing ourselves in the ferry-boat for the second time that day, we speedily arrived at the other side; then, having remounted our steeds—mine was Morgan once more—we dashed at full gallop up to the Fort, amidst the firing of cannon and the cheers of a welcoming crowd.

CHAPTER III.

FORT GARRY.

FORT GARRY, as we approached it, seemed to me a very considerable place. It was then, as I believe it is now, a great parallelogram of lofty stone walls with circular bastion towers, within which compass stood rows of storehouses in line with the sides, while, rectangularly to these, ranges of more important buildings occupied the central space, facing this way and that towards the opposite ends of the oblong.

On entering the enclosure we rode up to the principal house, where we were received by Dr. Bunn, the medical resident at the Fort; we had been previously met near the ferry by Mr. Fortescue, the second in charge, as representative of his chief, Mr. Mactavish, who was then temporarily absent; and very comfortable rooms were prepared for us in the large and spacious mansion which for a while was to form our home.

As two o'clock struck we sat down to an excellent dinner, at which, besides the gentlemen already mentioned, our party comprised three of the Company's clerks—Mr. Bridgeman, Mr. Watson, and Mr. Kennedy; also another traveller from the old country, Mr. Boyd, an English gentleman, who was resting here for a few days on his return journey, after a lengthened visit to the great camp of the half-breeds during the continuance of their winter buffalo-hunt.

It was a large party,—a pleasant one I am sure we all found it, and wished for no change in its number; unfortunately, however, it soon had to suffer a serious diminution, for, a few days after our arrival, Sir George's official duties called him away to Norway House, at the northern extremity of Lake Winnipeg, there to preside at the general meeting of the Company's chief officers,—an assemblage annually held to arrange the business for each ensuing year. Before his departure he occupied much of his time in forwarding my intended expedition, heartily interesting himself in all its details, and giving me invaluable assistance and advice; among other benefits, he was good enough to leave with me his own canoe-man, Toma, one of the trustiest and best of fellows.

I felt melancholy when the hour of leave-taking arrived; when farewells had to be exchanged with my much-valued friends Sir George and Mr. Hopkins. Our acquaintance had been but brief, as dates might limit it, but amidst such journeyings as we had shared in, a week does more for intimacy than months might do elsewhere. To me their companionship had been all that was kindly and agreeable, and mine, I trust, had to some extent been the same to them.*

It took me a full fortnight to complete my preparations, notwithstanding the great help I received from Dr. Rae and Mr. Mactavish—I might indeed say, from every member of the Company's establishment, for all vied with one another in

* Little did I think that I looked on one of these friends for the last time, as we stood at the gate and cordially pressed hands together. But so it was to be. Not much more than a year had elapsed, when a very kind letter from Mr. Hopkins brought me the sorrowful news of Sir George Simpson's death. He died in September 1860, after an illness of but five days' duration. Thus was taken from us a true, warm-hearted friend, an able, energetic man; thus was ended a most useful, active, and distinguished career.

kind offices. There were men to engage, horses and carts to buy, stores of every kind to lay in,—a thousand things, in short, to do, which waste time more than any one could fancy who has not gone through the same experience.

I was impatient to set off, for summer in this land is a very fleeting season ; but, putting that aside, the days slipped pleasantly by. The Protestant Bishop of Rupert's Land (then Bishop Anderson), and Bishop Taché of the Roman Catholic see of St. Boniface, were both good enough to call on me, and part of my time was passed in returning their visits and those of some of the other principal residents.

The Red River Settlement at that time consisted of a series of small farms and holdings, more or less thickly placed along the two banks of the river from which it derives its name. At Fort Garry, where there were houses enough to form a sort of scattered town, the population was sharply divided by the river into two distinct sections, the Scotch and English settlers and their half-breeds occupying the western bank, while the French Canadians, whether pure or half-breed, occupied the right or eastern bank.

On *Monday the 6th*, a very agreeable hour was passed by Dr. Rae and myself in visiting the Roman Catholic nunnery, following an introduction to the Lady Superior afforded us by Bishop Taché's kindness. It was chiefly an educational establishment, managed by the nuns, who, I believe, were Sisters of Charity. They wore an extremely quaint and pretty dress. The close-fitting gown was of fawn-coloured cotton, with sleeves square and open at the wrist. Over the gown was a dark blue cotton petticoat, with small white spots, which, reaching only to within six inches from the ground, showed a narrow strip of fawn colour beneath. A heavy kerchief of black material covered the shoulders, and was crossed over

the bosom ; a black poke-bonnet, above a plain white cap, completed the costume. A gilt crucifix hung from a girdle round the waist. Moccasins were worn instead of shoes, according to the universal custom of the country, to which even the bishops conformed. These excellent nuns educated about forty children, mostly from among the French population. We had the pleasure of seeing a few of the pupils, whom Sister C—— very obligingly sent for, asking them to give us some specimens of their progress in music. Two nice-looking dark girls of fourteen first came in, and played several pieces on a piano-forte,—which, I confess, it surprised me to see in this remote and inaccessible land ; then two pretty little fair-haired children took their place, and, like the others, played in a pleasing and very creditable manner. The institution was universally spoken of as most useful and popular, and as being in all respects remarkably well conducted.

Fort Garry was amply provided with churches, for besides the two greater edifices known as the cathedrals, there was a large place of worship for the Presbyterians, who formed a numerous and important body. I used in general to attend service at the Protestant Cathedral, where the Bishop himself officiated. Its interior was of extreme plainness ; but one thinks little of that where all is simple and without pretence. Though the Presbyterian psalms and hymns were not in use, it was easy to see that the Scottish race prevailed in the congregation,—the tunes and the manner of singing so forcibly recalling the sober, deliberate fashion of my own country, that I could scarcely believe myself thousands of miles away in the innermost heart of America.

On the Assiniboine, a mile or two off, there is another Episcopal settlement, named St. James's. I walked there

one afternoon with Dr. Rae, and called on the Rev. Mr. Taylor, the incumbent, who showed us the church,—a pretty though simple building, the interior ornamented with texts and other designs, all painted by himself,—then hospitably invited us to tea. In the parsonage drawing-room our attention was called to a picture of the Queen (a formerly well-known portrait from the *Illustrated London News*), which had been framed and conspicuously hung on the wall. It appeared that Indians often came expressly to see it, having strong feelings of loyalty to the sovereign; one old chief especially, a recent visitor there, had insisted on being allowed to kiss her Majesty's portrait in token of his loving homage.

Thursday, the 10th of June, was a notable day at Fort Garry. The first steamer that had yet navigated the Red River made her appearance that morning, bringing two or three passengers from Minnesota. "Ans Northup" was the name of this small, shabby, stern-wheel boat, mean and insignificant in itself, but important as the harbinger of new developments of what Americans are pleased to call civilisation.

Crowds of Indians stood silently on the shore, watching the arrival of this strange portentous object. Little thought they how ominous a sight it was for them, fraught with presages of ruin for all their wandering race! I know not whether these natives were Crees or Ojibways. They were an ugly, hard-featured set. One woman only had some good looks, and these chiefly consisted in the marvellous whiteness and regularity of her teeth. Like many of the others she carried a child on her back carefully wrapped up in the folds of her thick blanket, and looking warm and comfortable in its nest. A few Cree families had made their small encampment

on the prairie outside, near the Fort ; they were dirty, gipsy-like people, neither handsome, interesting, nor picturesque. I observed one of the little boys driving his father's horses home by shooting blunt arrows at them with all the force of a by no means despicable bow. From his very childhood the Indian learns inhumanity to animals.

By the 14th all my preparations were complete. I was fortunate in securing the services of a thoroughly competent guide—that is to say, head man—in John M'Kay, a younger brother of our energetic leader from Crow-wing. Under him were four men belonging to his own district—Morrison M'Beath and Donald Matheson, of unmixed Sutherlandshire descent ; George Kline,* of the French-Canadian race ; and James Short, whom I have already spoken of—all of them picked men, perfectly up to their work, excellent fellows in every possible respect. Besides this Red River party, there was Duncan Robertson, who came with me from Scotland ; also Sir George's canoe-man, Thomas Ariwakenha, the Iroquois, commonly known as Toma, whose duties consisted in driving the waggon, cooking my meals, and, along with Duncan, acting as my special attendant.

Under charge of this efficient brigade there was gathered together a very considerable amount of property of every sort and kind—horses and vehicles, weapons, provisions, and stores :—three new two-wheel carts, and the four-wheel waggon already mentioned, all filled to the brim with various sorts of baggage ; my own canvas tent (the same one I had used before), a large bell-tent for the men, oil-cloth squares, blankets, clothes and other personal goods ; bales of tea and

* The name is sometimes spelt Klyne or Cline, the spelling being varied even in the Company's account books. In pronunciation the *i* is sounded as *y*, not as *e*.

sugar, sacks of flour and rice ; biscuits, jam, and eggs; and dried tongues in plenty to keep us in food till we got fresh meat in the buffalo country ; many pounds of the Company's excellent flat "plug" tobacco for myself and my men ; an immense 90 lb. roll of the rather coarser twist, for the especial benefit of the Indians.

Then we had a great quantity of goods of another description,—such as a large copper box of rifle powder, kegs of common powder, bullets, shot, and caps ; a variety of weapons ; axes, hammers, saws, a canteen, a portable table, and a camp-stool, cooking utensils, etc. ; in short, we were provided with more than every requisite for the plains, besides extra supplies to furnish the customary presents to any Indian parties we might chance to meet.

There was one deficiency, according to some people's notions : I took no wine or spirits with me, nor allowed any to be taken, except a few bottles of rum. But little use was made even of this, and I afterwards left the greater part of it at Fort Carlton. What troubles and difficulties this saved me from I can only guess—from a great many, no doubt. We ought, however, to have had a small store of brandy for medicinal purposes. Indeed, I rather felt the want of stimulants when exhausted by hard work in the mountains.

To draw the waggon there were four horses—my former purchases, Paul and Anthony, and two white horses of much the same size as these, the one called Lane and the other Wāwbēé, which, in Cree, means "white." For the carts there were seven smaller beasts, the biggest of them scarcely more than a pony. Their names were as follows :—Deserter, Nez-Blanc, Gris, Mouldy, Spot, Bleu, and Little Black—uninteresting animals all, that cost on an average about £13 apiece. As this list may indicate, the half-breeds generally name their

horses according to colour or marking or other peculiarity, but sometimes after a former owner (*e.g.* Lane); sometimes, also, though more rarely, after a circumstance or a place, or occasionally in an altogether unmeaning way.

Then there were two buffalo-runners—a silver-tailed white pony, afterwards known as Wāwpōss (the Rabbit), a name suggested by his remarkable countenance; and “Great Black,” a large, well-bred horse,—which, with the last-mentioned, I bought from James M’Kay,—reputed the fastest runner in the settlement, but too unmanageable to be generally useful. Last, but best, came my favourite riding-ponies, Morgan and his companion Vermont.

My guns and saddle had not arrived at St. Paul before our departure from that place; so, by Sir George’s directions, John M’Kay and another man had waited there to receive them and immediately bring them on. The things soon came to hand, upon which M’Kay made rapid work, and reached Fort Garry just four days later than we did. It was with anxiety that I opened the gun-cases, but, excepting a few trifling rust spots, my precious weapons had taken no harm, after all the risks of damage they had run since I parted from them at the New York Custom-House.

As I afterwards discovered, half the number would have served my purpose, for, having little means to judge what was really needful, I had been erring far too zealously on what seemed the safer side.

Of all the armament, I held in infinite preference a pair of two-grooved double-barrelled rifles, by Purdey. A better pair no maker could possibly turn out. They have been immensely used, and in pretty trying service sometimes, but to this day they remain as good as when I first handled them some eighteen or nineteen years ago. They carry a

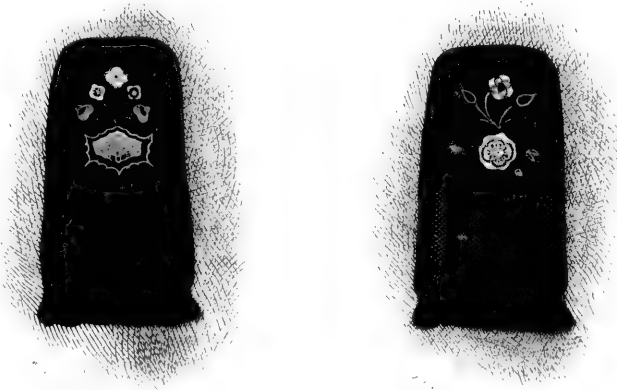
medium-sized, but very deadly, conical ball. My other rifle was one of large bore, by Dickson in Edinburgh ; a good one, I believe, but, on account of its weight, I hardly ever used it, not finding bullets of great size to be required. I had also a pair of excellent Purdey shot-guns, of No. 12 gauge, which, at close quarters, could throw round bullets most effectively. Besides these, I took a five-chambered revolving rifle, and a pistol of the same description, of the Colt manufacture. The latter I never used ; the former shot well, but I disliked it for reasons afterwards mentioned. These were the only breech-loaders I possessed, that sort of weapon being little employed for sporting purposes until a year or two afterwards.

My men had various guns and rifles of their own ; none were worth much, except a highly-serviceable double-barrelled gun belonging to M'Kay, of the best possible pattern for general use in that country. It was as thick in the metal as a rifle, and carried a bullet accurately to more than a hundred yards, and as its bore was of the size (28) universal in the Company's trade, supplies of ball could be got anywhere and almost from any person. Small as these bullets are—for, being round, they had none of the expansion of a conical ball, especially a flanged one such as that shot by my rifles, which were really but little different in the gauge—they are large enough, if well directed, to kill any beast in America ; stores of them, moreover, can be carried in little bulk—an inestimable advantage for the ordinary hunter.

This handy and neatly-finished gun, which was made in London at a trifling cost [£12 if I rightly remember], could also throw shot with a power that I have never seen equalled. Good as my Purdey smooth-bores were, M'Kay used to kill ducks at distances fairly beyond my range.

During the march I generally carried a rifle resting on a

rolled-up waterproof strapped to my saddle-bow, soon learning to poise it so that it almost steadied itself ; and M'Kay invariably carried his gun, balancing it in a similar manner between his own body and the high front-peak of his narrow Spanish saddle. My men also kept their weapons within reach, several guns and rifles always lying loaded in the carts, ready in case of an emergency ; and all of the party were furnished with more or less formidable knives, some even with good-sized military swords that had once formed part of the equipment of a Rifle Corps. We were, in short, a strongly-armed and sufficiently numerous company, able to bid defiance to any such small Indian band as that of the Pillagers of Lake Otter-tail.



RED RIVER FIRE-BAG.

CHAPTER IV.

FORT GARRY TO FORT ELLICE.

JUNE 15th.—After a fortnight's preparation and delays, my arrangements were at length completed, and by 5 o'clock that afternoon the expedition was fairly under weigh and proceeding steadily forward on its western course.

Our first march was not a long one ; we had not meant it to be so ; we had been only desirous to emerge from the neighbourhood of the Fort, so as to gather all into due place and order, and to shake off that spirit of lingering whose influences impede the traveller when within the sphere of settlements.

We were now encamped at Sturgeon Creek, some few miles on our journey. The weather was fine, everything worked smoothly, all promised well for the morrow.

June 16th.—We halted a few hours at White Horse Plains, where I dined at the Fort with Mr. Lane, the gentleman in charge of that station. The whole place was swarming with half-breed hunters and their families, who, with innumerable carts and horses, were gathering there preparatory to their start for the prairies on their great annual summer buffalo hunt.

I was glad to escape from this scene of noise and confusion, when we were at length enabled to resume our march ; but by that time it had grown late, so we only went some

seven or eight miles farther, and halted in a prairie, making our camp beside a grove of young willows.

June 17th.—At dawn of day I was awakened by a most delicious concert of birds singing in the bushes round my tent. The air was pure and fresh, the low rays of the sun gleamed on the dewy herbage, all nature was full of cheerfulness, and the pretty songsters tuned their voices to an encouraging strain.

As they fluttered around me, they seemed to beckon me forward, and their notes took the form of words, crying with endless reiteration — *This-is-the-páth ; Oh-this-is-the-wáy !* Sometimes one with a very deep voice would sing all alone — *This-is-the-páth ;* then a hundred voices would answer him rapturously in the shrillest treble, with—*Oh-this-is-the-wáy ;* and then all would unite together and chorus forth their little ditty again and again.

We were off by 5 o'clock this morning, but our progress was not very great, interruptions and delays occurring at every turn, chiefly on horse-dealing business, which is always a tedious affair. I added two capital animals to my lot—"Blond," otherwise "M'Gillis," a handsome chestnut with long wavy mane and tail,—sleek and immensely fat, which is here counted the greatest of merits, as bespeaking plenteous winter keep and corresponding stores of substance for future wear and tear ; and "La Framboise," a Saskatchewan-bred brown, too lean, but strong and hardy-looking ; both of them were very serviceable cart-horses, fit enough even for the waggon.

I thought "Blond" by no means a dear bargain at £18 ; for "La Framboise" I gave to the hunter from whom his name was derived £15, likewise also little Black, who was much too weak for harness and too small for the saddle.

Sunday, June 19th.—After a talk with M'Kay, I settled to have a complete halt on Sundays. [I made this rule from no strict Sabbatarian reasons, but from a belief that the special weekly holiday would be good for man and beast; a reminder of home ties for the former, and a useful rest for both. The Scottish settlers seldom shoot on Sundays, but their travelling goes on without difference, so my rule was rather a novelty. These breaks in the journey answered well enough in summer, but had to be given up when cold weather set in. Delay then becomes too dangerous. Thirty below zero is a great stimulator, especially when food runs short, and supplies are few and far between.

The camp was very unwholesomely placed within a dozen yards of a large mosquito-haunted marsh, whence the boom of the bittern resounded at intervals, like the distant roaring of a bull. My hardy men never thought of such things as damp and miasma, nor, to tell the truth, did I, yet probably many a troublesome symptom arose from camping in such swampy places, though our healthy active habits saved us from serious illness.

At this camp I passed two wretched nights, unwell without suspecting the cause, but moving on Monday to higher ground the change at once cured me. Perhaps some hours in the swamp, wading knee-deep after ducks and bitterns, had done me more mischief than I knew of.]

While here I received a visit from Mr. Simpson and his half-brother, who were on their way to Fort Garry. They stayed an hour or two, and had dinner in my tent. The former had come straight from Fort Pitt, on the Saskatchewan, where, till lately, he had been the officer in charge. He brought the unwelcome news that the Crees and Blackfeet were at the point of going to war. This, it was evident, would

interfere with my intended journey to the Elbow of the South Saskatchewan; it appeared, however, that very little game was left in those parts, the four years' peace between the tribes having enabled them to hunt on that generally debatable ground. It seemed likely that I should have to take the usual route after all, through a country disturbed by constant traffic, with no chance of sport for at least three weeks. But nothing could be really known till we got to Fort Ellice, so I continued to hope for the best.

Among Mr. Simpson's horses was one said to be an excellent buffalo-runner, and finding he wished to sell it, I availed myself of the chance, and bought it from him. This animal originally came from the Columbia River, and for some time belonged to Nähtōss, a Blackfoot chief. "Bichon" was the pony's name, on account of his yellowish hue,—but the paleness of his creamy fawn-coloured skin was handsomely relieved by the blackness of his mane and tail. He was upwards of fourteen hands high, rather bare-hipped, angular, and coarse-headed, strong however, and on the whole not bad looking.

June 20th.—Anxious to get forward, we made an extra long march, starting at 4.30 A.M., and going on till 8.30 P.M., with a couple of halts of two hours each. This took us so far that we camped near the point where the hunters' southward road diverged from the westerly track to Fort Ellice,—our own future line. Much did I long for the departure of our noisy companions, whose presence scared all the game away, and robbed the beautiful deserts of their peaceful, soothing loneliness. Nature has done much for the country we had been traversing that day, and the bright summer sunshine did something for it too. It was pleasant to exchange the miserable swamps for low hills of a light and

sandy soil, covered with poplar groves dotted with scattered spruces ; or for open plains, some flat, some undulating, but all sound and hard and dry, and redolent of warmth.

I was weary of the half-breeds, and their wasteful, destructive ways. Everywhere their ravages met the eye. Trees ruthlessly cut down or disfigured ; young poplars barked for their sap ; noble spruces shorn of their branches,—a wretched top-knot left to keep the tree alive, that it might bear some jovial voyageur's name, whose "lob-stick" it had been created, after a whisky-



A LOB-STICK.

drinking over the ruin.

Fervently as I wished them away, it cheered one's spirits to see the hunters on their march. There was infinite picturesqueness about them. Their long moving columns sparkled with life and gaiety. Cart-tilts of every hue flashed brightly in the sun, hosts of wild wolfish dogs ran in and out among the vehicles, troops of loose horses pranced and galloped alongside. The smartly-dressed men were riding their showiest steeds, their wives and daughters were travelling in the carts, enthroned on high heaps of baggage. Many of the women were clearly of unmingled Indian blood. Tall and angular, long masses of straight black hair fell over their backs ; blue and white cotton gowns, shapeless, stayless, uncrinolined, displayed the flatness of their unprojecting figures. Some wore a gaudy handkerchief on the head, the married bound one also across the bosom.

In M. B ——'s first cart there sat a singularly handsome girl, a dark-complexioned maiden of the mixed French descent. As with so many of her race, her countenance bore a half-shy, half-disdainful expression : she looked like one who would be amiable to few, ill-tempered to most, but true to the death to her husband or her lover.

The hunters were all in their summer clothing, wearing the usual brass-buttoned blue capot, with moleskin trowsers and calico shirts. Wide-awakes, or cloth caps with peaks, were the favourite head-coverings. Gaily-embroidered saddle-cloths and belts were evidently preferred to those of a less showy appearance ; red, white, and blue beading, on a black cloth ground, seemed to form the most general arrangement.

Mr. R——, who accompanied us part of the way and slept that night at my camp, rode beside us on a well-bred old white horse adorned with showy red-and-black trappings. He himself wore the dark-blue capot, a black cap, and black moleskin trowsers and moccasins, and to English notions looked a most unsportsmanlike figure, but like all the rest he rode gracefully and well.

They sit very upright, with the leg nearly straight up and down.. Their saddles are exceedingly small, either mere Indian pads, or narrow Spanish frames, high before and behind, with a long peak to the front. Over such a frame they strap a blanket, and sometimes also place another beneath, but nothing can keep these ill-contrived saddles from galling the horses' backs.



HALF-BREED'S SPANISH
SADDLE.

June 21st.—M'Kay had spoken much about the dangerous position of our camp, as lying in the direct war-path of the Sioux, so when in the morning it was reported that Black, Morgan, and Vermont were amissing, I feared that they were lost for ever. Happily they had only strayed, and not more than an hour was wasted in tracking and recovering the wanderers.

This was another lovely day, but, for all that, we rejoiced when a thunderstorm came on, for it drove away those pests

—the venomous, eye-blinding, hard-skinned, little sand-flies. Yesterday another enemy had troubled us—certain huge-headed gadflies, of hornet appearance, that are commonly known as “bulldogs.” Darting on man or horse, the wretch gives one short bite with his scissory clippers,—then off like a flash, leaving a poisoned and bleeding wound.

‘The insect tribe is a perfect curse ; one has no rest or peace. Mosquitoes on the wet ground and sandflies in the dry, bull-dogs in the sunshine, bugs in the oakwoods, ants everywhere—it is maddening. . . . The fever caused by these bites is what most distresses me. It is worst at night, when one gets warm in bed ; all the veins swell and glow, and seem full of liquid fire.’ . . .

After dinner we were detained till three o’clock by another thunderstorm, and then made a four hours’ march through a prairie country with numerous small lakes abounding in ducks. I shot a few, but my sport was much interfered with by a dog we had brought with us—a retriever that would not retrieve.

This detestable animal, Hector by name, a large, red, curly-coated water-spaniel, I had bought rather hastily from a man at Red River, who gave him a high character ; but the dog was an impostor and a nuisance. He would go into the water after a dead or wounded duck, secure it zealously, and bring it with him in the most promising style, but on coming near shore he always dropped it just out of your reach, and no persuasion could make him fetch it an inch farther.

Sometimes he amused himself by running forward and putting everything up. It was hard to say if he were more knave or fool—and the beast was a coward too. Good nature was his only merit, and it did not long avert his doom.

M'Kay became rather unwell in course of the evening ; happily it was nothing very serious, and some simple remedies taken under my advice—for in the absence of better practitioners I had to act as doctor for the party—proved perfectly successful in making a cure.

I was now beginning to know more about my men, and greatly they all pleased me, as well they might.—‘ My men go on very well ; I like them all. John M'Kay I like, . . . he is my head man (guide, as we understand the term, I can scarcely call him for he knows but little of the road, and did not profess to)—a steady good man, clever with horses, carts, or anything ; he manages the other men admirably, and suits me exceedingly well.

‘ Matheson is a jolly, handsome young Scotsman, singing snatches of gay songs all the day. M'Beath, a Scotsman too, grave, tall, and gentlemanlike. Kline, of the mixed French descent, active, clever, and very obliging. Short, a Scotch half-breed, more Indian in his ways than Scotch, an extraordinarily active lad, a perfect shot with either gun, arrow, stick, or stone.

‘ Toma, the Iroquois, is generally grave in look, but gets on well with the rest,—they are always joking together. I find him very attentive and useful. He sings pleasantly monotonous canoe-songs as he drives my waggon, sitting under the shade of a canvas tilt.’

[These extracts are partly from my journal, partly from a letter written about that date. I dwell more fully on the same subject afterwards.]

June 22d.—We arrived this afternoon at the Rapid River, sometimes called the Little Saskatchewan,* and scowed across without much labour or difficulty. This stream, where we

* The word Siskatchewan signifies—*The river that runs swift.*

crossed it, was about thirty yards wide, and of no great depth or body of water. The western banks in the vicinity are high, and prettily clothed with trees, which come down the grassy slopes in groups and patches projected boldly from the larger woods that crown the summit.

M'Kay went forward a mile or two and camped on the top of the bank, at the very edge of the descent. Meanwhile I took a turn with Matheson to look for deer in the woods, but 'we got nothing, and the mosquitoes got us; they were perfectly dreadful.' Even the camp-fires did not keep them away that night; they 'came right into the smoke of the fires, and bit like tigers.'

During most of the day's march I rode Vermont, who was by no means as great a favourite as Morgan, though not without his good qualities.—'Vermont has gone much better since I took to wearing spurs. He is a nice little beast, with funny sly ways of his own. His ears are remarkably small, and he constantly keeps them pricked forward, which adds to his cunning and sagacious appearance.'

June 23d.—A fine day, but spoiled by two or three thunderstorms, one especially heavy while it lasted. After breakfast I walked on before the carts and shot ducks till dinner time. I only bagged four, though double that number fell, and even for these I was obliged to wade in hip-deep every time, for the useless retriever as usual refused to bring them out. The country was of the prairie sort, and rather flat than undulating, but every small hollow had its swamp or lake, in which innumerable ducks made their abode.

About camping time we came to a pretty piece of water, known as Salt Lake, but as its quality answered to its name we did not halt there, but passed on a mile or so farther.

Three notable mischances befell us to-day. M'Kay lost

his whip, I lost a particularly good knife, and, worst of all, my watch stopped, and though I set it agoing it never could be trusted afterwards.

June 24th.—Having started about 5 A.M., we arrived at breakfast time at Shoal Lake, another very pretty sheet of water, which cannot be much less than ten miles in length. There was an agreeable variety of animal life on its well-wooded shores. First we observed a wolf prowling round the camp, whereupon we took our guns and gave chase, but he escaped into the brushwood. Then, a moment or two after, as I was returning from the fruitless pursuit, I saw a moderate-sized, black and white, bushy-tailed animal moving slowly among the thick bushes, and shot it, chiefly from motives of curiosity. It was a skunk,* a much handsomer creature than might be supposed, and not offensive if killed dead on the spot, as happened in this instance—very fortunately! for he was close to the place where our breakfasts were preparing.

Soon afterwards I tried my rifle at a loon swimming far out on the lake, but he escaped by rapid diving, an accomplishment which renders this bird proverbially hard to hit: a modern express would probably be too quick even for him, but my rifles, though fast of their kind, carry no heavier charge of powder than the $2\frac{1}{2}$ drachms generally given to two-grooves of that date and pattern.

Before starting, I made a grand turn-out of my armament, the baggage being in such confusion that nothing was ever available when wanted in a hurry. I now had the gun-cases neatly arranged in the waggon, putting the more important uppermost, and disposing their contents so that anything could be got at in a moment when required. This

* *Mephites Americana*, *var. Hudsonica*, *The Hudson's Bay Skunk*. See *carck*—Cree Indians.—RICHARDSON, *Faun. Bor.-Am.* vol. i. p. 55.

business finished after great expenditure of trouble, I travelled for variety's sake in the now orderly waggon till dinner time, but it was very jolty work, so I had Bichon saddled, and rode for the rest of the day.—'He went well, and is evidently used to gallop on rough ground, but he was tiresomely anxious to stay with the other horses, and when forced to go on, neighed incessantly, driving away, of course, any game that might chance to be near.' I got M'Kay to try him, thinking he would perhaps go more quietly under his hand, but it made no difference, it was a habit that had yet to be cured.

June 25th.—A short march before breakfast brought us into the vale of the Assiniboine, up which we pursued our way in the midst of a heavy thunderstorm, till, having come nearly opposite Fort Ellice, we halted and camped. The river at this part of its course flows on with many windings through levels overgrown with brush and timber. The valley, above a mile in width, is bounded by high wooded banks on either side. It was a pretty landscape, although much was hidden by the rain; this partial concealment, however, tended to magnify the distances, and add to the scene more importance than really belonged to it.

In the afternoon M'Kay and I rode on together to Fort Ellice, which is beautifully situated at the edge of the glen of Beaver Creek, a deep, wooded ravine that cuts its way at right angles through the hills of the Assiniboine vale. At the river-side we found a clumsy old scow, in which we took our horses across; then we ascended a high bank by a very steep and difficult road, which led us to our destination, where we were hospitably received by the superintendent, Mr. M'Kay, accompanied by his father, a retired Company's officer, who was at that time assisting in the management of the Post.

After tea we rode back again, returning to camp before daylight had quite departed.

Sunday, June 26th.—Having so little distance to go, we resolved to cross, and camp in the neighbourhood of the Fort. My men were all busy with the crossing, so I rode on by myself, and, arriving in time to join Mr. M'Kay at dinner, had the pleasure of sharing in some fresh buffalo-tongues which he had lately brought back with him from the plains, where some of his people were still engaged in a hunt. These tongues were excellent, as juicy and tender as possible, and came doubly welcome after the perpetual salt meat of the last ten days.

Early in the afternoon the carts made their appearance, having got safely through considerable difficulties both at the river and the hill; and a place well separated from the Fort, though not far off, was fixed upon as the site of our encampment. I chose for my own tent-site a sandy level platform at the edge of a precipitous bank, 300 feet high, that overhangs the Beaver Creek where it is about a quarter of a mile across. It was a pretty place: as I sat on the camp-stool near my door, I could see to the very bottom of the deep ravine, and follow the windings of its course far upwards and downwards, till it lost itself in the distance on either side.

Two Indians, an Ojibway and a man of some different tribe, paid me a visit, and were treated to a dinner and a smoke. They were evidently interested in my map of British America, and seemed quite able to understand it, making shrewd remarks about several topographical matters.

June 27th.—After long consultation with the three M'Kays, I determined to attempt to pass to the Indian Elbow, going by a track that pretty closely follows the course of the river Qu'appelle. The chief difficulty was to find a guide, for John

McKay knew nothing whatever of that part of the country. Many of the Fort Ellice men were at the plains hunting buffalo, in a different direction, and others were afraid to risk their scalps among the anticipated Blackfoot war parties ; but at length a suitable person was discovered, a French half-breed named Pierre Nummé,* said to be an excellent man for my purpose, who fortunately happened to be staying near the Fort. Pierre, however, put an extravagant value on his services, and I was obliged to promise him the immense pay of £25 for one month, and so on in proportion for any further period,—the term of service to be only six weeks, failing a new and separate agreement.

Two ox-carts came in that morning from the plains, bringing a number of fresh buffalo-robcs,—“ robes,” it must be understood, signifying skins with the hair on, as distinguished from those dressed without the hair and made into leather, which are simply known as “ skins.” They also brought four calves, funny little yellow things, very hot and tired after jolting such a distance in the carts, unsheltered from the powerful scorching sun. When taken young enough, these animals can be perfectly tamed ; in proof of which there was an instance close by, for at that very moment a two-year-old buffalo heifer was grazing about quite quietly in the neighbouring prairie, among the common dairy cows belonging to the establishment.

* In the Company's statement of accounts this individual's name is entered as Pierre Denoummée, but in the engagement drawn up at Fort Ellice, to which his mark is appended, the word appears as Nummé, which I have retained, as it was the name he always went by while in my employ.

CHAPTER V.

FORT ELLICE TO QU'APPELLE FORT.

THE afternoon was far advanced when we left Fort Ellice. Owing to the amount of our stores and baggage it had become clear that further means of conveyance were required, especially if hunting trophies dropped in by and by to make up extra weight; so we borrowed a couple of carts from the Fort, and hired the same number of Company's horses. We also supplied ourselves with two needful things that had been omitted—a spade and a scythe.

At the same time Mr. McKay did us a good turn by lending us a handsome black pointer named "Pointer,"—brother to that same Blucher who so gallantly chased the bear near the river of Red Lake. He proved a most useful animal, being a good retriever and water-dog, besides possessing the accomplishments denoted by his name.

We camped about twelve miles from Fort Ellice, among swampy richly-grassed prairies, dotted with many detached "islands" of poplar which rose dark and high in the midst of the expansive sea of plain.

June 23rd.—Pierre Nummé is a quaint-looking oldish man, with a dark, bony, French-Indian face, and long black hair. He wears leather trowsers, which have become like varnished mahogany from stains and hard usage, a blue cotton shirt, and a dark-blue woollen, mushroom-topped, lowland

Scotch bonnet, such as I remember common in Forfarshire in my boyhood, but it has red and white chequers round the headpiece, and Pierre has added a glazed leather peak. His eyes are weak, so he wears huge goggles made of wire and glass, which have a strange effect, throwing a dash of the pedantic into his rough and hunter-like appearance. He seems a good-natured fellow, and is said to bear a high character.'

There were thunder showers during the night and morning, and towards afternoon steady rain began, so we made an early halt. M'Kay took advantage of an adjacent oak-grove to lay in a supply of spare axletrees. It interested me to see how cleverly the men brought the rough logs into shape with no finer tool than the edge of the axe.

For my own part, I read Shakspeare's "Two Gentlemen of Verona," and passed a tolerable afternoon in spite of the rain.—'This open-air life suits me well, though, when one considers it bit by bit, it does not seem so very charming. Long wearisome riding, indifferent monotonous eating, no sport to speak of, hard bed upon the ground, hot sun, wet, no companion of my own class; nevertheless I am happier than I have been for years.'

June 29th.—As we went on our way in the early morning we met a Cree Indian and his wife travelling by themselves, with a dog drawing their effects in a little cariole. He was a chief's son, and showed us with evident pride a letter to his father from the superintendent of Qu'appelle Fort, full of praises of the highly estimable parent. At leave-taking I gave him a present of tobacco, and we parted on the most cordial terms.

After dinner I set up a target, to see if I were in good shooting after such long disuse, and made some tolerable hits

with my favourite Purdey; then passing the rifle on to M'Kay, he took two shots, and beat me with the second, which struck very close to the bull's-eye. Old Nummé now looked out his weapon, a gun I had got for him at Fort Ellice,—one of the regular "trade" articles, flint-locked, thin-metalled, and priced at but a few shillings over a pound in the Company's tariff.

Putting up a piece of canvas considerably larger than a house door, Pierre withdrew some thirty paces and blazed away, but without the slightest result. By no means discouraged, the persevering fellow immediately set to work to improve his gun. He filed and hammered at the barrel, and twisted it about with his hands, finally he thrust a long stick down it, then placing the projecting end between the cart-wheel spokes, levered with might and main till he thought the tube was sufficiently straight. Absurd as all this seemed, it really improved the gun, which, being of the same pattern as those bought by the Indians and rendered serviceable by similar rough doctoring, was in time likely to become a fairly useful weapon, at any rate for extremely short ranges.

We found a most pleasant situation for our evening halt, encamping ourselves on the summit of a warm dry knoll, carpeted with fragrant wild thyme. At dusk a wolf made his appearance, and sneaked slowly past at the foot of the hillock, taking care, however, to keep himself more than a hundred yards from the tents. Catching up my rifle, I fired a hasty shot at him. I could hardly see the point sight through the growing darkness, but the ball struck hard upon him somewhere, and rolled him over; nevertheless he staggered to his feet again, and limped towards the thicket he had come from. There was a general rush to secure him, the

dogs of course foremost, but Pointer showed none of his brother's pluck, and Hector proved no hero, so with two or three snarls and snaps the wolf put them to rout, and fairly made his escape.

June 30th.—We had now come to a glorious plain. The sandy soil was covered with a short, crisp grass, perfect for riding over, had it not been for the treacherous badger-earths, which spread themselves into great honeycombs of half-hidden holes, undermining the lesser elevations and forming absolute pit-falls for a galloping horse.

Nummé thought we might find cabrees here, so I mounted the Bichon, while he, to my surprise, chose mouse-like little Mouldy, and we set off together in search of the antelopes. After riding four miles we saw a buck, but could not get near him. We then observed five others, does and young ones, and as fresh meat was much wanted, I determined to go after them in spite of the evident poorness of the lot. Creeping behind a bank, I got within range of the largest one. Her haunch was straight to me, but they had taken alarm and were in the act of starting on their swift flight over the boundless prairie, so I had no choice but to shoot at once, without much thought of aim; luckily the ball went high, and dropped her lifeless with a broken neck.

Pierre cut her up like a juggler doing a conjuring trick. One moment, an antelope stretched along the turf,—the next, nothing there but a paunch and a ghastly back-bone,—the next, Nummé in his saddle blandly triumphant, enshrined amidst nicely-cut joints and limbs and strips of flesh, hung round him in the tidiest fashion; no London butcher's shop more severely trim in its pink-and-white array.

The cabree is the only antelope in America. It is a pretty, buff-coloured creature, less than a fallow deer, and very

lightly formed, in appearance something between a deer, an antelope, and a goat. The males have black horns, strong and thick for a few inches from the head, then dividing,—the front half projected forward in a short triangular point, the other half much longer and turned backwards in a hook, like the horn of a chamois; hence the animal's name—*Antilope furcifer*, or *Prong-horned Antelope*. They are shy and wary, and too swift to be approached on horseback.*

We had a long ride back to the carts, for the men had taken a wrong turn and diverged considerably towards the river Qu'appelle. Feeling tired after so much riding under the fierce sun-rays that beat on those shadeless sandy plains, I got into the waggon, and travelled in that manner till we halted for the night at the Wolf Hills, a low, rather thickly wooded range that separates two open prairies.

It began to blow hard, and about 10 o'clock a tremendous thunderstorm broke over us, with torrents of rain at intervals. Whenever the rain ceased the mosquitoes bit furiously, and drove the horses nearly to madness. Several times that night the men had to quit their sheltering tent in order to keep up the smoke-fires under lee of which our poor beasts found refuge from their persecutors.

July 2d.—Yesterday afternoon we passed along an elevated "black earth" prairie, camping at Great Creek,—a broad valley whose sides consist of round bluffs perhaps 100 feet in height, flat on the top, and divided by deep ravines; but after breakfast to-day we came to plains of a sandy character,

* *Antilope furcifer*. *Apestat-chu:os*, also, *My-atthk*—Cree Indians. "The *Antilope furcifer* differs from the true antelopes, in having a snag or branch on its horns, and wanting the crumens or lachrymal openings, and also in being destitute of the posterior or accessory hoofs, there being only two on each foot."—RICHARDSON, *Faun. Bor.-Am.*, vol. i. p. 263. *Antilocapra Americana*. —MIND, *Can. Ex. Exp.*, vol. i. p. 300.

also at an elevated level, and traversed them till we reached a very pretty lake, which, I was told, formed one of a series that were connected with the River Qu'appelle. It is named the Lake of the Valley. In size it seemed somewhere about a hundred acres, its banks were low and unwooded, its shores composed of sand and pebbles. Farther on it is connected with a narrow, river-like piece of water, with steep wooded banks, which runs out of the Great Creek.

After this I rode forward on Wawpooss, and went to the summit of a bluff, whence there was an extensive view over a level prairie, bounded by a stretch of woodland in the distance.

No life was visible except a solitary wolf—or fox—running across the plain. Not a buffalo to be seen, though for the last two days we had been constantly finding the skulls and bones of former herds. M'Kay, however, discovered a few pigeons in a little grove, and shot two or three of them.

We halted for dinner not far from Qu'appelle Fort, and afterwards occupied ourselves with some more target practice. At 120 yards, Short made a beautiful shot with his own double-barrelled flint gun—which was of a class but slightly superior to Nummé's single-barrel,—striking very close to a bull's-eye little larger than a half-crown piece. He was said to be equally skilful with the bow : they told me that he could beat any Indian with that weapon, being even able to put an arrow into a bird hovering on the wing.

The noise of our shooting was heard at the Fort, and presently an Indian, riding a black horse plenteously bedaubed with "white mud" (pipe-clay), came galloping up to reconnoitre us. Readily satisfied as to the character of the party, he stayed with us a while and regaled himself with meat and tobacco, then returned to announce our approach ; and when

soon afterwards we continued our march, we almost immediately found ourselves in view of a body of horsemen, who were awaiting us on the rise of an eminence at no great distance from the track. They turned out to be Mr. Cardinal—the superintendent of the Fort, and five or six young Indians in their best array, glorious in paint and ornaments and fantastic apparel.

The most striking figure among them was a Cree, who wore a beautiful white robe of dressed skin, bordered with a vermilion and black pattern that seemed to be meant for rows of calumets. They were all well mounted, and rode with ease and spirit, and not without a certain grace,—though they crouched very strangely, like wild beasts dropped down from trees. One young man amused me by the frank artlessness of his vanity. Happening to see that I was looking at him, he immediately began to show off in the most undisguised manner, stirring up his fiery steed to all sorts of antics, the rider, meanwhile, ostentatiously at his ease, and eyeing me with good-humoured little smiles of ineffable self-complacency.



CREE PATTERN.

As soon as we arrived at the Fort, Mr. Cardinal took me into a good-sized room, which we had hardly entered when several old Indians came in and joined us. They belonged to a party of Ojibways who were waiting here for a short time before following the main body of their tribe to the plains.

Nothing could exceed the politeness of these Indians, as they seated themselves quietly round the room and smoked their pipes with gentleman-like deliberation,—though with

more than common enjoyment, for they had been weeks without the comforts of tobacco, owing to the total failure of the stores at the Fort. There was plenty of conversation as well as smoking, but none of it of the slightest interest so far as I could make out. My rifle took their fancy exceedingly; they seemed never tired of looking at it, passing it from hand to hand with many admiring speeches.

We formed our camp about a mile from Fort Qu'appelle, hoping to be a little out of reach of visitors, but before we were well settled the Indians came thronging in. There were twenty-four men in all, mostly Ojibways. One of the party, however, a young man of pleasant appearance named "Les Prairies," was the son of "Fox," a well-known chief of the Plain Crees, and others of the same tribe were there also. They were the best-looking Indians I had yet seen,—'very civil, sitting or lying quietly round our fire, and touching nothing.' I sent them a couple of spans of tobacco a-piece, and double that quantity to each of the two head-men. One of the latter presently came forward and thanked me for my gifts, at the same time offering a dressed buffalo-skin of no great value. He lingered awhile, then grumblingly told M'Kay that he expected more tobacco in return. M'Kay, to whom I had left all these arrangements, immediately answered that we were not traders, and gave him back the skin.

The Indians stayed very late: I thought we should never get rid of them. Many of the women seated themselves a little distance off, and watched us with unwearying interest. Babies, in little painted cradles, were carried by some among their number. Their dress consisted of a tunic which left the neck and arms bare, a robe above it and leggings beneath. The men were similarly attired, though no two were exactly alike; Les Prairies and another Cree had noticeably better

clothes than the rest. One of the head-men appeared in a curious cap of badger-skin,—perhaps in allusion to his name, "Pointed-cap."

After our visitors left us wolves came prowling about, but I could not succeed in getting a shot at these cautious marauders. For reasons of their own, which I never happened to ascertain, the Ojibways "danced" a scalp all night, and long banished sleep by their monotonous incessant drumming.

Sunday, July 3d.—The Indians, I was told, were much ashamed of the conduct of the head man who had offered us the scalp and then resumed his gift, and blamed him exceedingly, being afraid that I would not now visit their camp and bestow on them some ammunition according to promise. Of course I meant to make no difference in any way.

Our first occupation that morning was to leave supplies of tobacco with Mr. Cardinal for himself and his people. I then walked to the Indian camp, accompanied by M'Kay, who on all such occasions acted as my interpreter. "Spots-in-the-sky" (the head-man who had *not* behaved badly) as a matter of right received our first visit. His tent, like all the rest in that encampment, was a conical structure of buffalo-skins, enclosing a circular space of moderate dimensions. Several women and children—none of whom were pretty—were seated on the ground, also two or three young men, one of them industriously at work in making triangular arrow-heads of sheet-iron to fix into a set of light wooden shafts which he had already prepared.

After due handshaking, old "Spots," in the politest manner, invited me to seat myself on a buffalo-robe at the further side from the door. He then treated us to a long oration, full



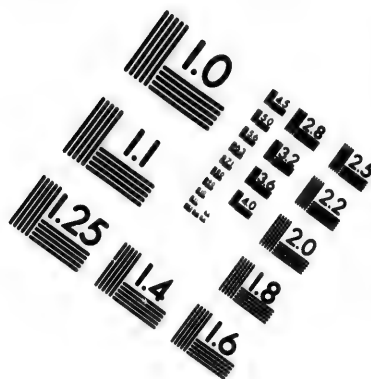
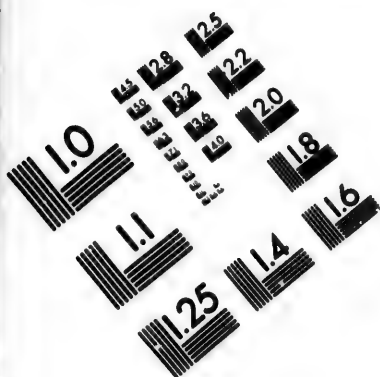
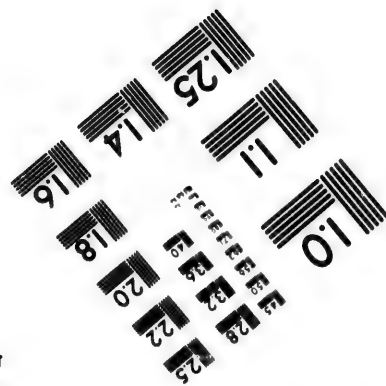
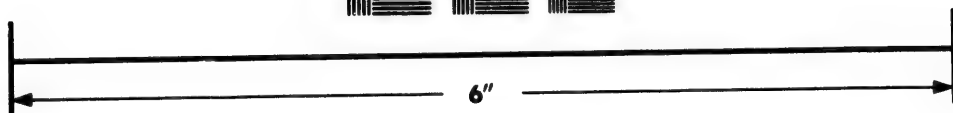
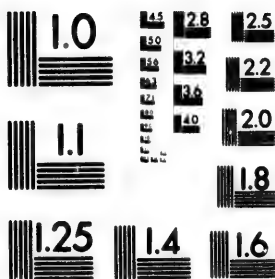


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of rather suggestive acknowledgments of my former liberality, and reproaches against the other head-man for his shabby and unseemly conduct ; which being concluded, I made a short reply to the ancient orator, and M'Kay then handed him some powder and ball to distribute to his people as he thought fitting. He seemed really gratified, and expressed his thanks with genial warmth and friendliness. After this I took my departure, not forgetting to give some tobacco to the women for their own particular use, as otherwise they were likely to have come off but badly.

We next went to call on Pointed-cap, the rival head-man. We did not stay long under his roof, however, for he was far less talkative and agreeable than Spots, and plainly enough exhibited his discontent with my present of ammunition, though the supply was the same as that which had been so well received in the other tent. Nevertheless, I thought it best not to seem aware that any want of cordiality existed ; so I was careful to make no change in my manner, and when I rose to take leave they all behaved with the utmost respect and politeness.

In Pointed-cap's tent there were two young wives with their babies, and two or three girls,—all of them equally devoid of good looks. There were also several young men. I saw no curiosities either there or at Spots's home, nothing indeed worth remark except the arrow-making already mentioned.

In the evening Les Prairies and a man handsomely dressed in the Cree fashion paid me a visit. From the latter I obtained a curious whip, which had its handle and wrist-loop ornamented with mink and fisher fur, and its thong double-lashed towards the point and strung round with pieces of copper,—receiving it in exchange for a flannel shirt, a case in which both sides had the best of the bargain.

I requested him, and Les Prairies, and the Cree who wore the painted robe, to come to me next morning for a private present of ammunition ; which they did not fail to do. Old Spots also appeared to claim a knife I had promised him.

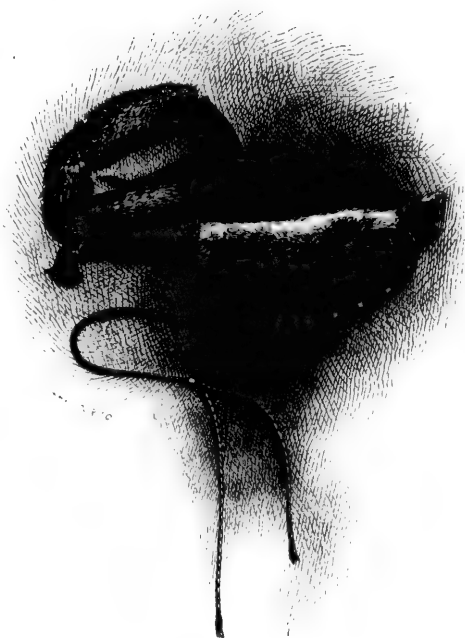
[Having much sympathy with the Indians, I felt sorry to have disappointed even an old grumbler like Pointed-cap. But in this case I acted entirely under M'Kay's advice, having to consider the likelihood of an early meeting with great camps of the Crees, and perhaps of the Assiniboines, or even the Blackfeet, whom it would need all my available resources to propitiate, especially as I intended a lengthened absence from the Forts, where alone one could procure fresh supplies. These Ojibways, indeed, had but little claim, being so small a party, and rather beyond the bounds of their own proper territory.]

Nearly all these Indians were painted with vermilion, which decidedly became them, heightening the richness of their swarthy skins and jetty locks, and adding lustre to their searching glances ; one young warrior, however, had chosen to mask his face in a veil of sickly yellow, relieved by scarlet spots and streaks encircling both his eyes. It was hard to refrain from laughter at the sight of so extraordinary a figure. Certainly, thought I, this is the incarnate god of bile, if such a deity there be in any of the paradises.

A dog happening to pass drawing a "train" after the common Indian fashion, I was amused to see the astonishment of my little Vermont ponies, unaccustomed to such sights at home. With pricked ears and starting eyes they trotted after the marvellous object and followed it wherever it went, till at length the dog managed to slip away and make his escape from their inconvenient attentions.

Last night the wind was exceedingly high and boisterous,

and it continued so during all the day, but it fell towards evening, and there was a singularly lovely sunset. I sat at my tent door till daylight faded into darkness, now gazing at the splendour of the sun as he floated, all gorgeous in strong orange hues, amidst the opaline tinting of the delicate light-grey clouds, now looking on the pages of Shakspeare's "Troilus and Cressida:"—ah! with what different scenes did my memory come to link the most noble passages of that drama.



CREE WHIP.

CHAPTER VI.

QU'APPELLE FORT TO THE INDIAN ELBOW.

JULY 4th.—We had arranged for an early start, but a thunder-storm, with heavy rain, delayed us, and it was 8 o'clock before we got fairly under weigh. Some of the Fort hunters started at the same time for the plains, but they were going by a different track, which tended far to the south of the unfrequented district that we were bound for. Our own road ran for a while through a prairie with many islands of brush, it then passed through black-earth plains and swamps with occasional sandhills, then traversed a country of sandy, rolling character.

As we were journeying along a cabree rose close to us : I could have shot it had not the dogs run forward and chased it away. This filled up the measure of Hector's iniquities. M'Kay and I held a court-martial on him, and condemned him to death,—as useless, as a fool, as spoiling sport, and as teaching the other dog bad lessons. The sentence was instantly carried out : M'Kay put his pony alongside, and sent a bullet through the culprit's heart. As the poor wretch lay dying, Pointer, a generally good-natured dog, flew at him and worried him savagely, though he had never had a quarrel with his ill-fated companion.

Towards evening we saw several wolves, and ran a very fine white one, but could not overtake him.* While we were

* *Canis lupus, occidentalis. The American Wolf. Variety B., Lupus*

camping, however, near a large wood,—some miles beyond a place called Long Point, where Nummé had passed three years with certain free traders,—our wolf again made his appearance, so I slipped out alone and tried to stalk him among the bushes. I got within a hundred yards, but by that time it had grown too dark for shooting at any such distance, and to get nearer proved impossible, for he quickly discovered me and kept just out of reach.

July 5th.—I stalked two cabrees, and put a bullet through one of them at 130 yards. He ran some way and lay down. As I approached him he got up and ran again: I gave him another ball; it failed to stop him, though it grazed his backbone, making the hair fly up like spray from a fountain. Following on with Nummé, I got another chance. I thought I had missed, for the antelope went on; but no, he stopped short, swayed about a little, and fell dead—the bullet had grazed his heart. He had but small horns, being only a two-year old buck, worth little except for eating, and not very much for that purpose, owing to his extreme leanness.

Then began a long ride across fine rolling sandy plains, as we made our way to the Qu'appelle, in which direction the carts were travelling, but at last we reached the pretty valley through which that river flows towards its ultimate junction with the Assiniboine. Bluffs 200 to 300 feet high, much scored (apparently by torrents in the spring), and in some places in double and triple range, bounded a vale varying from a mile to half-a-mile in width. Through this meandered the Qu'appelle, at that time of year a shallow stream some albus. There are five varieties—viz. A, B, C, D, E:—Grey Wolf (*Mayhagan*—Crees), White, Pied, Dusky, and Black, all much of the same size and character. Wolves vary in size in different districts; the length, exclusive of tail, is from 4 feet to 4 feet 4 inches; and height at shoulder from 2 feet to 2 feet 10 inches.—RICHARDSON, *Faun. Bor.-Am.*, vol. i. pp. 60-72.

twenty yards across, pursuing its winding course through endless brushwood and small poplar groves.*

We crossed the river and ascended the opposite bank, taking with us supplies of wood, as a wide, bare, sandy expanse lay before us, dotted with small hillocks and utterly devoid of trees or brush, though not altogether wanting in fuel, being thickly strewn with dry buffalo dung—"bois des prairies" I believe the French voyageurs call it, it is sometimes also spoken of as buffalo chips. We frequently used it in our camp fires. I rather liked to burn it, as it throws out a very pleasant strongly aromatic smell redolent of wild thyme and other herbs of the prairie.

The swamps were almost dried up, so we had to march hard and far in search of a good camping-place, which at length we found at the side of a small lake. We expected to meet Indians, but they had gone on, which I did not at all regret. Another cabree gave me a chance this afternoon, but I missed him; however, I was more lucky with a young wolf, which Kline saw lying in a hollow about eighty yards from the track.

'The sandflies were most troublesome all day, and towards evening the mosquitoes came out in force. The latter I divide into three classes: the common brown, the large soft drab, and the fierce little black—Quirk, Gammon, and Snap!' [I named them thus after the well-known firm of lawyers in

* "The Cree name of the Qu'appelle river is *Katapaywis sepe*, and this is the origin of the name as told me by the Indian:—A solitary Indian was coming down the river in his canoe many summers ago, when one day he heard a loud voice calling to him; he stopped and listened, and again heard the same voice as before. He shouted in reply, but there was no answer. He searched everywhere around, but could not find the tracks of any one. So from that time forth it was named the Who Calls River."—HIND, *Can. Ex. Exp.*, vol. i. p. 370.

Ten Thousand a Year. The Quirks were pertinaciously blood-sucking, in a humdrum, respectable manner ; the Gammons alighted like thistle-down, and drank your blood with tender slyness ; the Snaps rushed in with sudden fury, and nipped more than they sucked, though careful not to go empty away.]

Poor thin-skinned Pointer made most absurd contortions as he writhed under the bites of these tormentors. It seemed as if they came as ministers of vengeance to punish him for his cruelty to Hector.

Nor was this the only trouble that immediately befell him. That identical night, as I was settling myself to sleep, tired and feverish from the heat of the weather, I was wakened up by loud and terror-struck yelping, and in a moment Pointer rushed trembling into my tent, seeking refuge from a large white wolf, which, in his anxiety to devour our well-fed dog, had ventured into the very camp in pursuit of him, going close by the place where all the men were sleeping in the open air.

Awoke by the disturbance M'Kay reached out for his gun, and with one shot ended the career of this voracious enemy. It was a wolf of the largest size, a gaunt old monster, with teeth worn to the sockets from long use. No vestiges of food were to be found in his stomach ; sheer hunger had doubtless driven him to his unusual act of daring. It was the last night he could have crept in unperceived, for we afterwards kept regular watch, having come to a more dangerous part of the country, where our horses required protection from the attempts of Indian marauders.

July 6th.—There was heavy rain in the night and morning, and the damp, I suppose, brought on an attack that made me feel very weak and ill for a while. After we set out I

stalked a cabree, but in vain. Then I stalked three white cranes, which I had observed looking exquisitely beautiful beside a small pool of water ; could not get near them ; tried a long shot, and missed.

During part of the day we travelled near a branch of the Qu'appelle, called Long Lake Creek, a stream flowing through a gorge of considerable depth. As we came to the brink of a steep-sided narrow trench of a glen that runs into this valley, we were surprised to find in it a hidden grove of trees, in one of which a raven had built its nest and reared its young.

We camped at the end of a lake in Stony Valley. So intense was the heat that I was compelled to leave the tent door open all night, trying for the first time a muslin mosquito net, which was hung from above so as to encompass my bed and form a sort of inner chamber. It answered tolerably well, but not well enough to repay the trouble of arranging it, so I never used it again.—'The flies [mosquitoes] are the pest of creation. Welcome rain, wind, sun,—anything that annoys and destroys the tormentors !'

July 7th.—Marching before breakfast we came to some stony sand bluffs, where I ran a wolf a little way, but unsuccessfully. Presently Nummé and I observed a single buffalo bull, about half-a-mile from us. He instantly made off, the wind blowing towards him, and as neither the ground nor our horses suited, we had to let him go his way.

Hoping to come on more buffalo, I mounted the Bichon, and M'Kay mounting Wawpooss, we rode on together and searched all the country round. No game, however, was to be seen, except some cabrees in the distance. Large bands of Indians were evidently in the neighbourhood ; in one recent camp, probably of Crees, we counted no less than forty-

two tent-sites. Anxious not to draw their attention, I had the canvas tilt removed from the waggon, as it was by far too conspicuous an object.

This was a prairie country of sand and crisp grass, of level tracts varied with hills and bluffs and undulations, of many little lakes and swamps scattered about here and there. Flowers of the gayest colour enlivened the landscape. The most common were the small tiger-lilies and the roses, and next came blue-bells and white strawberry blossoms. Sometimes acres and acres were covered with intermingled masses of the orange lily and the pendulous blue-bell, the whole of them so short of stem that the glory of the flowers combined with the rich greenness of their leaves, and it seemed as if a vast oriental carpet had been thrown upon the plain.

Towards evening the heat of the weather changed to heavy showers, with flashes of lightning at intervals; we saw that a storm was coming, and made haste to camp in a wild rocky valley that offered itself at no great distance from the track. Three very young wolves appeared when we entered this secluded glen, but I did not care to shoot the poor little creatures. The plains we had been passing through during the day were thickly strewn with buffalo skulls, the relics of former slaughter by Indians or half-breed hunting parties. 'We did not see as many ground-squirrels as usual, but, as usual, saw a pair of small birds chasing a crow.'

July 8th.—The little wolves kept up a chorus all night long, beginning each fresh strain with mewing whines, like a family of peevish kittens, then bursting into tremulous, melancholy howls. The effect was very pleasing; it harmonised so well with the savage loneliness of the scene, that I should have been sorry to miss this wild wolfish music.

The rain had ceased, and it was a fine morning when we

resumed our journey. I again mounted myself on Bichon, in case of meeting with buffalo, and carried a twelve-bore gun loaded with ball, instead of my favourite rifle. M'Kay, as before, selected Wawpooss. No buffalo were anywhere discoverable, but we presently observed a large white wolf, and at once gave chase. He ran well, so well that I could not get near him; Wawpooss, however, showed his speed, and distancing the Bichon, just as he had done in a race on the previous day, he soon brought M'Kay all but alongside. Another moment and a shot would have finished the exhausted wolf, but he saved his life by turning suddenly down a steep rocky bank that overhung some swampy shallows of the Qu'appelle. I dismounted and followed, but the beast kept himself closely hidden in a jungle of high reeds and rushes: I could see nothing of him, and got badly mosquitoed for my pains.

Soon after this we all descended into the valley and halted for dinner. The heat was intense, not a breath of wind stirring; the earth glowed like a furnace. The air swarmed with bulldog flies, the only living creatures that seemed to flourish in this stifling atmosphere.

We made a long halt, and then travelled up the valley till we came to the Sandy Hills, the first of which we ascended. These hills, covering a considerable tract, are about 200 feet high, and are entirely composed of sand as fine as that of the sea-shores. Near them the grass grows short and scantily, much as on some of the "links" along the Scottish coast. The Crees fancy that the souls of good men enter into a paradise concealed amidst these arid ranges, while the souls of the bad have to pass over an exceedingly narrow bridge, whence they fall into pits of despair and utter wretchedness.

I was much disappointed at seeing no buffalo, for we had fully expected to come upon them to-day. The only tracks of any sort that we noticed were those of some Americans, who having started for Fraser River without a guide, had here lost themselves in the desert, to judge at least from the circuitous courses they had been describing. 'Others of the same party had engaged one Whiteford for their guide from Fort Garry, but he had positively refused to go by the road we were following, fearing the Indians,—"*les sauvages*," as the half-breeds call them.'

As we toiled onwards through the sand-hills the heat became almost unbearable. For miles together no water could be found. Pointer twice fell into a fit, choking and gasping in agony, but both times fortunately when water happened to be within easy reach. He had another narrow escape for his life, the waggon very nearly running over him, but the wheel merely bruised his paws, and did him no harm to speak of.

The horses suffered miserably from the bulldog flies. Poor Bichon, being light coloured and thin of skin, was more attacked than the others. The blood ran in streams down his cream-coloured sides—he looked as if he had been spurred from head to foot. My arm grew stiff from killing his tormentors; again and again I slew seven or eight at a blow. Sometimes I counted three or four dozen upon him: and this lasted all day, and only ended at sunset.

'Bichon is a pony of original mind. He is not pretty, indeed is getting somewhat elderly, but he is the most amiable of animals, albeit rather obstinate. Bland affability beams from his countenance and rests on the white star on his broad forehead. He likes to be petted, and will come up to me when I am riding another horse to have his face

scratched, which, alas ! it often much needs, for the mosquitoes and bulldogs make sad havoc of ' *le pauvre Bichon*.'

'Of all my horses he is the only one that eats flowers, and I have had many a laugh at seeing the old fellow wander off the track to browse on a tuft of blue-bells or tiger-lilies. He particularly delights in certain purple weeds that grow in such large tufts as to be often mistaken at a distance for buffaloes. Why is it absurd that a horse should eat flowers ? I know not why, but it is. An ancient philosopher died of laughter at the sight of an ass eating roses.

'Poor Bichon ! his worst fault is neighing when parted by ever so little from his friends. At length he has learnt that this is a forbidden practice, so he takes great pains to check himself, and at any moment of forgetfulness or strong temptation changes his incipient neigh into the funniest little muffled squeaks, ending in a sort of low appealing sigh. . . .

'I could go on writing for hours about my horses, for having no companion, I am always watching them and amusing myself with their queer ways.

'Much might be said about that strange little pony Wawpooss, who looks such a weak, poor wretch, and is really one of the fastest and most enduring of buffalo-runners. He is milky white, with red specks on his head and neck ; his mane and tail are very long and straight and fine, and of a silvery glitter ; his skin is as sleek and shiny as satin.

'He has the funniest head that ever was seen, very large about the nose, and his eyes have a most singular expression of resigned gravity and patient endurance of life—the endurance of a Cynic philosopher, of one soured rather than unhappy. I call him Wawpooss, which means Rabbit, because he looks like one of those animals ;—not one of the silly kind, by no means so, but some austere old buck, who,

under sufficient provocation, would drum handsomely on any spaniel's ribs ; yet he is very mild and peaceable, and all the other horses bite and bully him.*

When evening approached, we began to search for a camping-place near some good water, but for long in vain. M'Kay and I went to examine several small lakes that came into our view ; all of them were brackish, and tasted like bad carbonate of soda. Anxious to cool my horse, I rode him into one that looked better than the rest ; half mad with thirst, he plunged his head in and tried to drink, but instantly stopped in disgust. For my own part I could not refrain, whatever might be the nature of the fluid, so I dipped down my leather cup, and swallowed large draughts of the tepid brine, and, parched and feverish as I was, it seemed refreshing in spite of its nauseousness.

At last we came to a lake filled near the upper end with a luxuriant growth of rushes and wild garlic, among which the water proved on trial to be nearly free from salt. This, it is said, is usually the case where such vegetation is found, —whether because the plants have a purifying quality, or because they mark the position of wholesome springs, I did not happen to ascertain.

* Except one or two sentences from my journal, this extract is taken from a letter written about that date to a friend at home.

CHAPTER VII.

INDIAN ELBOW TO CROSSING OF SOUTH BRANCH.

JULY 9th.—The sun was again powerful, but a high west wind cooled the air and made travelling far more pleasant. About mid-day we arrived at the overhanging brow of a valley, and there, outspread beneath us, I beheld the long desired object—the Elbow of the South Saskatchewan. Few but Indians have seen this place, as it is in a neighbourhood too dangerous to be much visited.

‘The river here makes an elbow-like angle, whence is derived the name; its course is nearly due north, and then it turns due west. The channel seems about five hundred yards wide just above the turn, and is full of sandbanks, which give a shallow appearance to the stream. On both sides its banks are broken into bluffs, with wooded ravines sloping gradually back to the prairies. As if in continuation of [the line of] the lower part of its bend [forming an easterly prolongation of the hollow it occupies after its sharp turn], runs a valley a quarter of a mile wide, at the side of which we are encamped. Down this flows to it a small stream [running due west]* that rises, I am told, about five miles off in a quaking morass, whence also proceeds the

* The “Aiktow River,” or “River that turns.”—PALLISER, HIND. Mr. Hind states, no doubt correctly, that this stream rises in a pond twelve miles distant from the Elbow.—*Can. Ex. Exp.*, vol. i. p. 355.

River Qu'appelle, which at first runs due east, though soon making a northerly turn near the Sandy Hills. The valley of the little stream is, in direction, a prolongation of that of the Qu'appelle, but the ground is so elevated at the marshy height of land which obstructs it, that water communications between the Qu'appelle and Saskatchewan would be almost impossible.* Arrowsmith's map [then probably the best existing—Sir George Simpson gave me the copy I possess] is very faulty here, the Qu'appelle being shown to rise some sixty miles from the Elbow, instead of within five [? twelve] miles as it really does.'

Mr. Hind describes the South Branch, near the Elbow, as "a river of the first class, nearly half-a-mile broad, and flowing with a swift current, not more than 350 miles from the Rocky Mountains, whence it takes its rise" (HIND, *Can. Ex. Exp.*, vol. i. p. 366). I cannot help thinking this measurement too largely generalised. I could hardly have estimated the width of the river at 500 yards if it had nearly approached 880 yards (half-a-mile).

Mr. Hind, however, repeats his estimate of "half-a-mile broad" . . . "at the Elbow" (vol. i. p. 388). He elsewhere speaks of the same river as continuing "for many miles [below the Elbow] about 700 yards broad" (vol. i. p. 382). My own party crossed at a place between twenty and thirty miles below the Elbow, and I there estimated the

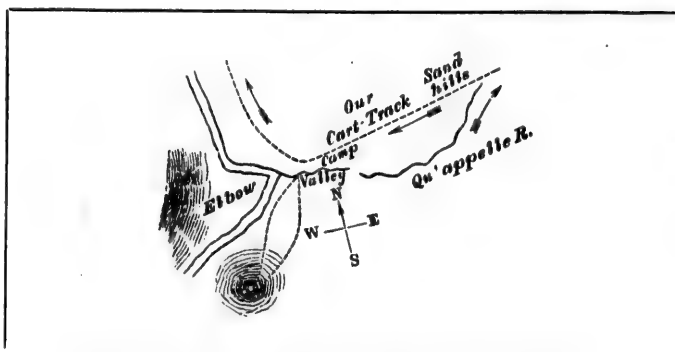
* Mr. Hind goes fully into this question. He considers a junction feasible—"The construction of a dam 85 feet high and 800 yards long would send the waters of the South Branch down the Qu'appelle valley and the Assiniboine into Red River, thence past Fort Garry into Lake Winnipeg. The same result would be produced if a cutting were made through the height of land in the Qu'appelle valley to the depth of 40 or 50 feet, and a dam some 30 or 40 feet high thrown across the South Branch."—*Can. Ex. Exp.*, vol. i. pp. 426-430.

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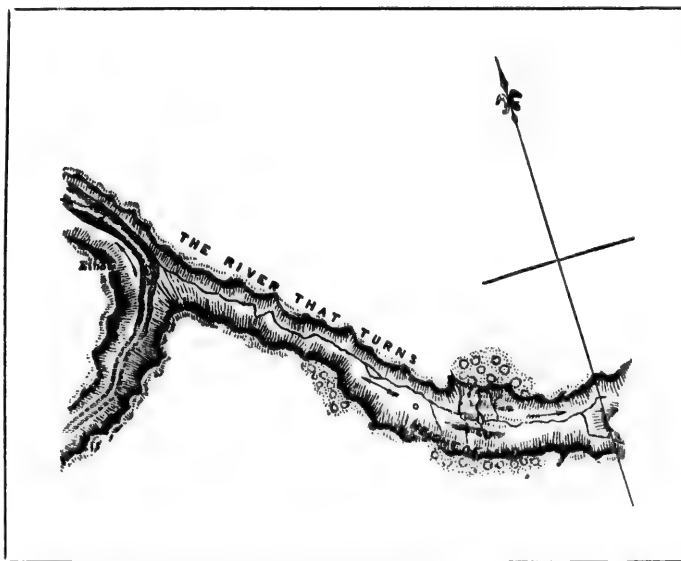
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*Eye-sketch showing the Elbow of the South Saskatchewan :
by Lord Southeast, 1859.*



Plan showing the Elbow of the South Saskatchewan : by Mr. Hind, 1858.

(See p. 77.)

breadth at 600 yards, the river being considerably in flood. While noting this discrepancy, I admit that Mr. Hind is far more likely to be right than myself, both as a skilled and accurate observer, and as being furnished with scientific instruments—if in this case he thought it necessary to use them. It is possible our measurements apply to slightly different portions of the river. Mr. Hind uses the general words—"at the Elbow," while I write—"just above the corner" [of the Elbow.]

Another discrepancy I may venture to point out. I refer to the obtuseness of the angle at the Elbow in Mr. Hind's map (vol. i. p. 366). In my own rough eye-sketch I make the angle far more acute, and in my diary I note that the stream flows 'nearly due north, and then due west,'—my authority for these bearings being merely an accurate pocket compass. I observe, however, that in the maps appended to the Reports of Captain Palliser's Exploring Expedition (*Blue Books* 1859 and 1860), the Elbow has an angle, which, though intermediate, rather less resembles Mr. Hind's drawing than mine.

On the bank above the Aiktow valley we came for the third time on a recent site of the great camp of Indians, Assiniboinés we then supposed, but I believe they were Crees. They had evidently driven all the buffalo before them to the hills about thirty miles up this south branch of the Saskatchewan, the farthest point in the Blackfoot direction to which the other tribes can venture. In the evening I walked with Nummé about the river-banks, but saw nothing to shoot, and found the mosquitoes quite unbearable.

July 11th.—After breakfast I rode with M'Kay and Nummé to explore the country higher up the course of the river. We went to the top of a hill about nine or ten miles

off,—not a living creature was in sight ; so we returned, keeping along the river-side, among little banks and knolls and patches of wood, but there was nothing there either, not even a fresh track.

M'Kay having subsequently found out that a great band of buffalo had crossed the Saskatchewan at a place not far from the Elbow, the question presented itself whether we ought to follow them, and afterwards make straight for Fort Pitt,—or travel up stream towards the Cypres Hills and the Blackfoot country, as we had lately thought of doing. After some consideration I determined on the former route, both as offering better prospects of sport, and as likely to be less dangerous, for it lay almost entirely within the territories of the friendly Crees. Want of water seemed our principal risk in traversing such arid deserts ; as to that, however, we were ignorant enough, only judging by hearsay—the remoter districts being unknown even to our guide. And here an unlooked-for difficulty arose,—Nummé, this very guide, quietly announced that he would not go with us to Fort Pitt, alleging that his contract only bound him to take us to Fort Carlton.

This could not for a moment be endured. I summoned Nummé to my tent, and made M'Kay read the engagement aloud, and explain to him that if he refused to guide us wherever I might desire, we would guide ourselves, and would send him back forthwith, on foot, and without the remainder of his pay—more I could not threaten, for he had been partly paid in advance. On hearing this decision he at once gave in ; said he had merely wanted to know what his contract was,—that he had misunderstood something,—that he was ready to go anywhere.

July 12th.—We left the Elbow soon after breakfast, and travelled northwards down the course of the stream, keeping as near it as the many ravines permitted. Our object was to discover a suitable crossing-place, in order to follow the buffalo herd, but it was no easy matter to find one, such facilities being rare in that part of the Saskatchewan, owing to the general steepness and muddiness of the descent to the water's edge.

The river became much prettier below the Elbow. The banks had a gentler slope, and were less broken into unsightly naked bluffs; the stream itself was more free from shoals, and looked very noble in its vast expanse, with level grass-clad promontories projecting into it at varying intervals, marking out its course and diverting it into many a graceful bend. The weather was pleasant and genial, though a high easterly wind struck hard upon us as we continued our journey. We made quick marching over the hard, dry, sunbaked ground, crossing alternate hill and plain as we kept along the river-banks, and it was late in the day when we halted.

This morning, seeing a cabree buck with a magnificent head, I ran him several miles. Vain attempt! Morgan did his best, but could not approach the antelope. Then I got on Black and ran a doe,—equally hopeless, even the swift Black was left far behind.

As I returned from the second chase I perceived M'Kay and Nummé driving a large buffalo before them, which on my nearer approach I found to be an old bull, very thin and sickly and hardly able to move. It was a mercy to save him from the cruelty of the wolves; so, as he had to die, I rode past him on Black and gave him a shot for practice' sake—a buffalo's strange form making him a puzzling mark for a beginner,—but I placed it too high, as one is always apt to do,

and it merely dropped him on his knees, without depriving him of life. I then dismounted, and, walking close up to him, fired both barrels of my gun right at the centre of his forehead. There was no result, no more than if a clod of earth had struck him: the bull continued in the same position, glaring at me with savage eyes; the densely matted hair on his thick skull had completely defied the penetrative force of a smooth-bore. M'Kay then gave me my Purdey rifle. At the very first shot the conical bullet passed clean through hair and bone, and the huge old buffalo rolled over, dead.

Soon afterwards we saw another bull feeding about, a good distance away on the prairie. I mounted the Bichon, M'Kay took his favourite Wawpooss, and we set out, using every depression in the ground to conceal ourselves from view. The bull, however, quickly observed us, and made off at a remarkably fast pace, with a long start in his favour besides. After some miles' galloping we began to near him. M'Kay was leading, though not by much, and when signs of the finish appeared, he drew rein and let me pass on.

The bull was still running, but in evident distress. Suddenly he stopped short in a small hollow, turned round and faced me. Bichon was rather blown, and as I checked him at the edge of the hollow he made a great stumble, as nearly as possible falling on his head—in which case I should have landed directly on the horns of the buffalo. Happily my pony recovered himself in time, and the bull remaining at bay about ten yards from me, I dropped him with a bullet in the shoulder, and finished him with another in the brain. Like many of the males at that season this fine, well-grown bull was exceedingly scant of flesh, so we left his carcass, and merely brought in the tongue. Even that was tough eating, though far from being rank or ill flavoured.

Bichon agreeably disappointed me. On seeing the buffalo he got quite excited, and forgetting his usual laziness, ran far better than I had at all expected from his recent performances. He was a quiet and manageable beast, very different from troublesome Black, who required one's whole attention when game was on foot. No more buffalo appeared that day. There were numbers of cabree, but the plain was too level for approaching them.

July 13th.—As we sat round the fire before turning in last night, M'Kay and Matheson told me some interesting stories about the Indian magic, 'medicine' as they term it. The Crees, it seems, are the most noted for these mysterious arts. Some of them, when wishing to injure another man's horse, either through jealousy or to secure a race, are able to destroy its galloping powers for ever by rubbing a certain substance on its legs. There is a hunter at Edmonton who was the swiftest-footed runner in the district. While he was sleeping, some Indians who were in the same tent rubbed his legs with magic stuff; thenceforth his power left him, and has never since returned.

'There are Indian conjurors who will allow themselves to be bound from head to foot with nets, cords, straps, or anything; then, entering their small 'medicine tent,' it is seen to heave violently for about five minutes, after which all the fastenings are thrown out at the top of the tent, not one knot being disturbed, and the wizard steps forth perfectly free. This I had heard before from James M'Kay and also from his brother; it was Matheson who began speaking of it last night. Angus M'Kay (another brother) once tied a leaf of a Bible in the net, and the conjuror presently declared he could do nothing till it was taken away!

'John M'Kay and Matheson both vouched for the follow-

ing story. Two Red River men of their acquaintance (whose names they mentioned) beat an Indian for stealing their clothes. A day or two afterwards the men both went raving mad; they spoke constantly of the Indian, they even told where he would be found when people were sent to apprehend him, and sure enough he was discovered hidden in that very place. These two men have been subject to similar attacks ever since, and cannot stand the least drop of strong liquor. The charm is said to be wrought by conjuring with a lock of the victim's hair.

McKay told me that an uncle of his had a wonderful power of seeing what took place at a distance—second-sight in fact. He did not dream, but sat rapt in meditation, and then told what he saw. He constantly directed the hunters to where the buffalo were to be found. On one occasion a man (whose name was mentioned) had half his gunlock blown off, when firing at a cow. Assisted by his friends, he searched for it everywhere, but in vain. Next morning the seer said to him—'The lock is about ten yards from where the cow fell. It is close to a badger heap, and you will see it glitter in the sun as soon as you get near.' Believing in his powers, they went, though the distance was long, and all happened as he had declared it to them.

'Once some horses were lost. He told the owners to go to a valley near Scratching River, where they would find a certain number of their animals. They went; all was as he had said. This seer's power suddenly left him a few years ago.

'There is a well-known hunter at —— (name mentioned), said to be a very good, religious man, and he solemnly vouches for the truth of the following story. He was one of the best shots in the country, and was owner of a particularly good gun. One day an Indian came in, took up the gun, looked

at the lock, handled it a little, and then walked away. The hunter went out hunting as usual, to his surprise he could hit nothing. He cleaned and examined his gun ;—it seemed all right, and shot perfectly at a mark, but again and again he found that he missed every living creature with it, though with other guns he shot with all his former skill. Some time afterwards the Indian returned. The hunter told him what had happened. 'Oh,' said the Indian, 'give me your gun.



HEAD OF A CABREE.

I will make it shoot for you again.' So saying, he took it up, handled it a little, and returned it to its owner. Thenceforth the hunter could kill game with it as well as ever.'

During our march this morning I rode a good way into the plain, leaving the carts on the track, and on rejoining them

where they had halted near the river, I found that M'Kay had just wounded a large cabree buck. It had run some distance, but I followed on till a lucky chance occurred and enabled me to finish it. As the head was very fine, I had it prepared for stuffing.*

After this, we saw a buffalo bull lying at the foot of a sand-hill, his huge brown body looking strangely sombre in its contrast with the pale yellowish bank immediately behind it. I hastened to mount the Bichon, M'Kay mounted the impetuous Black, and, managing to get near the bull before he observed us, we soon pressed him hard, though he ran exceedingly well. Finding we had the speed of him, he suddenly faced in my direction, and made a half charge, as if doubtful whether to fight or fly. I shot at his shoulder but missed him, then on he came—with no want of purpose this time. I waited till he got within ten yards, then turning in the saddle I fired my other barrel,—a second failure, for at that moment the experienced old Bichon made a quick side-leap to avoid the horns of the bull, which all but grazed us as he passed,—onward he went, and never looked back at me, but rushed savagely at M'Kay who had now just opened upon his view. With ready movement M'Kay drew his horse out of danger's way, and tried for a flank shot,—snap! his gun misses fire; the bull, however, made no further attack, but went off as hard as ever he could gallop.

By this time my rifle was reloaded; I followed the fugitive, and soon got abreast of him. Again I missed—or at

* The horns measure $14\frac{1}{2}$ inches in extreme length, following the curve. The length from root of horn to divergence of upper part from triangular snag is $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches. The distance from point to point of horn is $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches; from point to point of snag, $12\frac{1}{2}$. Width between roots of horns, from 3 to $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

least did not kill; he was hit, perhaps, but bullet-holes are invisible in the thick wool about a buffalo's neck and shoulders: however, hit or miss, for some good reason he presently stopped, and stood motionless. I rode close up to him, took steady aim, and shot him through the heart.

'I do not think a buffalo bull near so terrible-looking as a common bull, nor does he seem to be very rapid in his movements:'—so runs my journal, but I believe that I was underrating the power and speed of the buffalo, being deceived by the lumbering awkwardness of his action, and the grotesque wildness of his appearance. There was certainly one very critical moment in the adventure just recorded, nothing but Bichon's readiness having saved me from a possibly fatal overthrow.

Immediately after this another old bull presented himself, and, thinking that a little sport would please the men, I offered to let any one run it who felt that way inclined. They settled that Duncan, being a stranger, should have the first chance, so I lent him Bichon, with my gun and saddle, and M'Kay and he set off together. When they approached closely the buffalo charged with some savageness, and Duncan was unable to get a proper shot; however, they drove it nearly up to the camp, when several bullets being put into it, it fell dead, and its carcass rolled into the river. It proved to be the best bull yet killed, though very far from fat.

All this time I was having a severe chase after a wolf, which I pursued on foot, while M'Beath, riding slow little Nez-blanc, endeavoured to cut it off and force it to go in my direction. Being a lame and sickly animal it was soon overtaken by the pony, but nothing would induce it to turn, regardless of shouts, and lashings from a heavy whip, it obstinately headed towards the plains. I followed at a good

run, but its pace was a little faster than mine,—I could no more overtake it than M'Beath could make it change its course. After running a mile I grew very hot and weary, for the sun was powerful and the chase up-hill, so, pausing for a moment to draw breath, I chanced two long shots at the fugitive, and luckily broke one of its hind-legs, which Pointer, who had been keeping his distance, no sooner observed than he valorously ran in and bit at the wounded animal's haunches, just as he had done to poor Hector when in his dying agony. After this the wolf was quickly finished. It was a female of the large white variety, but extremely thin and wasted from some injury or disease.

Feeling tired after the chase, I put on a swimming-belt and refreshed myself with a bathe in the turbid river; but I took care not to venture far from land, for the current was tremendously strong and rapid, and the belt helped much less than I had expected. The Saskatchewan, which was in a very flooded state, seemed to me to measure about six hundred yards across. Two or three flat sandy islands just showed their heads above the rush of the stream. The banks at that part were comparatively low, and sloped gradually from the prairie till within some fifty feet of the water, when a steep pitch intervened.

The whole place abounded with the berries we had been feasting on during the last week. 'They grow on a willow-like bush, and taste like geans or wild cherries, but sweeter. In size they resemble common white currants, and are of a purple colour. M'Kay calls them Shad (?Shade) berries; the Indian name is Meesasskootoom-meena.'*

All this evening we were busy with preparations for cross-

* *Amelanchier Canadensis*. *Mesaskatomena*—Crees. — HIND, *Can. Ec. Exp.*, vol. i. p. 373. *Aronia ovalis*. *Meesasskootoom-meena*—Crees. "This

ing the river. 'The men worked at frames for two flat-bottomed canoes. They placed six stakes in the ground to mark out the shape, and round these (which they afterwards removed) they made an open frame of light wood, with ribs still lighter. The whole was tied together with bark or leather thongs, then an oil-cloth was stretched over [and securely fastened at the gunwale.*] The Indians use prepared skins to cover the outside.'

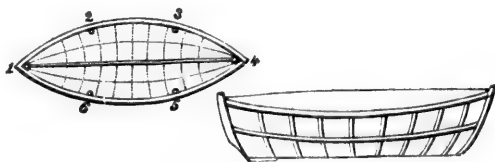
Duncan and I tried our hand at bait-fishing, but we soon gave it up, for we could catch nothing but some soft-looking little fish of a kind considered hardly fit to eat. [I believe that these fish were "suckers" (*Catostomus Hudsonius*,—*Grey Sucker*, *Carpe Blanche*; *Namaypeeth*—Cree Indians), a species of carp of which four varieties appear to frequent the Saskatchewan, the whole of them stated by Dr. Richardson to be little "esteemed as articles of food, being soft and watery when boiled." According to the same authority, the average length of the grey sucker is eighteen inches.

Unfortunately I made but small inquiry as to the fishing abounds on the sandy plains of the Saskatchewan. Its wood, named by the Crees *Mecassquat-ahtick*, is prized for making arrows or pipe-stems, and is thence termed by the Canadian voyageurs *bois-de-fleche*. Its berries, about the size of a pea, are the finest fruit in the country, and are used by the Crees . . . both in a fresh and dried state. They form a pleasant addition to *Pemmican*, and make excellent puddings, very little inferior to plum-pudding."—HOOKER, *Flor. Bor.-Am.*, vol. i. p. 202.

* Catlin makes mention of somewhat similar canoes as in use among the Mandans of the Upper Missouri. "The skin canoe" ["more familiarly called in this country a bull-boat"—Vol. i. p. 195.] . . . is made almost round like a tub, by straining a buffalo's skin over a frame of wicker-work, made of willow or other boughs. . . . These canoes are made in the form of the *Welsh coracle*, . . . which is a very curious circumstance, inasmuch as they are found in the heart of the great wilderness of America, where all the other surrounding tribes construct their canoes in decidedly different forms, and of different materials."—CATLIN, *North Am. Indians*, vol. ii. p. 138.

capabilities of the Saskatchewan streams, and my own party only tested their resources on one other occasion,—I refer to the capture of some fine trout (October 1st) in the Bow River, the principal head-water of the South Branch. On consulting Dr. Richardson's treatise, I do not find that any salmon exist in the Saskatchewan, whose generally turbid water would appear but little suitable for them,—the fish more or less directly indicated by him as its inhabitants being:—The Sterlet or Sturgeon, the Barbot, the Sucker, the Hudson's Bay Perch or Piccarel, the Trout, and the Gold Eye. Besides these, the Catfish or Barbue, and the Pike or Jack, are referred to,—the former as "found sparingly in the lakes that flow into the Saskatchewan;" the latter as "abundant in every lake in North America."—(FRANKLIN, *Journey to the Polar Sea*, ann. 1819-22. App. pp. 705-28,—*Notices of the Fishes*, by Dr. Richardson.)

The White Fish (*Coregonus Albus*) is also exceedingly abundant in many lakes of that district, but I have never heard of its occurrence in the rivers with which they communicate.]



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CHAPTER VIII.

SOUTH SASKATCHEWAN TO CHERRY BUSH.

JULY 14th.—‘The river crossed this afternoon. All and everything safe—thank God. Some of the horses nearly went under, but all got through at last.’ [There were great differences in their modes of swimming; some of them floating high in the water, while with others little but the nose appeared above the surface, and their utmost efforts seemed scarcely to prevent them from sinking.]

We began by unloading the carts, after which the men pushed and pulled them through shallows to a half-dry flat, in ordinary times a long projecting spit of sand but now a sort of island, a good way distant from the bank of the river. Thence they were passed to the other side on the oil-skin scows, which also took all the baggage across in several separate transits. For my own part, I was quickly and easily ferried over by Toma and Matheson, in an unladen boat.

Indians, we discovered, had lately availed themselves of this very crossing-place. Close at hand we came upon the recent traces of an extensive camp. I picked up among the tent-sites a piece of hard grey stone, not unlike a coarse sort of agate, also a broken bit of ore, both of which seemed to have been used for some particular purpose. Fragments of marble and red agate were scattered here and there on the

river-banks. Wild strawberries, in full ripeness, grew plentifully near our encampment. Small and deficient in flavour, though pleasant to the taste, they much resembled the variety so common in the woodlands of Europe.

July 15th.—We continued our march in a westerly direction, and after some twelve miles over a country of dried-up swamps and sandhills, we arrived at a brackish lake about five miles long and of a similar breadth. Its name, if it had one, was unknown, this road being little frequented; even Nummé had never travelled by the line we were following, though he had been on hunting expeditions in the neighbouring country.

The bulldogs were swarming all around. I killed fifty as a sort of sacrifice while Toma was cooking my dinner, and might easily have doubled the number had I been so inclined. But it was impossible to clear the tent of such thronging legions, besides they were unpleasant to crush, owing to the stickiness that exuded from their large fleshy bodies.

After dinner we marched some ten miles farther till we came to a branch of Eagle Creek,* where we halted, as the stream was deep and miry, and more than twenty yards across.

While camping went on, I rode a mile or two into the plain in search of cabrees. A small herd coming in view, I dismounted to look at them, upon which Morgan took advantage of a moment's freedom, while I was handling my telescope, and galloped straight to the other horses, leaving me a hot and weary walk home.

‘This is the greatest trouble one has,—all the horses are so unwilling to leave one another. They are always looking

* So at least Nummé termed it, but I have my doubts as to his accuracy in this and other similar instances.

back and creeping when you are forward, they edge in towards the carts if you are at one side, and they pull and go at a jog-trot if you stay behind. Then they neigh constantly, disturbing game, and in short drive one mad. Vermont is worst, but Bichon is very bad too. He is nearly cured of neighing now. One cannot stand much provocation here. After travelling hours under a burning sun, tormented by flies, bathed in sweat, and parched with thirst, unreasonable conduct on the part of one's horse makes one hardly an accountable being.'

July 16th.—This morning brought us the good news that a vast herd of buffalo were close at hand.* We hastened to cross the creek, and passed through it with no accident worth mentioning; this accomplished, we began to make arrangements for a hunt on the largest scale within our power. Limited by the number of our buffalo-runners, only three of us were to be on horseback. The Bichon was, as usual, my own choice; M'Kay, on Wawpooss, was to keep near me for a while, and initiate me into the sport; old Nummé, at his own particular request, was to ride Black, that most unruly of animals. For the sake of quick loading I took a smooth-bore instead of my rifle, by which I also gained the advantage of a larger bore.

* "Bos Americanus. *American Bison. Buffalo*—Hudson's Bay Traders. *Moostoosh*—Cree Indians. . . . "The Bison, when full grown, is said to attain at times a weight of two thousand pounds; but 12 or 14 cwt. is generally considered a full size in the fur-countries. Its length, exclusive of the tail, is about eight feet and a half; its height at the fore quarters upwards of six feet, and the length of its tail is twenty inches."—RICHARDSON, *Faun. Bor.-Am.*, vol. i. pp. 279, 283. "The buffalo bull often grows to the enormous weight of 2000 pounds."—CATLIN, *North Am. Ind.*, vol. i. p. 247. It is possible that the buffalo on the south of the Missouri, where Catlin hunted, may average a greater size than those roaming farther north in the Saskatchewan districts.

We soon sighted the buffaloes. They were on a dry prairie, slightly undulated in character, here and there hilly, and bounded by higher ranges to the west and towards the north. Immense herds were stringing across the whole face of the country. The deep rolling voice of the mighty multitude came grandly on the air like the booming of a distant ocean.

As we got nearer the herd we could see that a large proportion were bulls. They were drawn up in close array ; some colossal old fellows stalked about by themselves at the flanks of the columns. The cows were mostly wedged up in the front and centre, while the van kept slowly moving on.

When within two hundred yards or so we dashed forward ; they quickened their pace, but kept their order ; we got pretty close to them, the column broke, and the buffaloes cantered off in many separate bands.

Choosing out a small drove of fine-looking cows, M'Kay and I galloped towards them side by side as hard as ever we could go. The harder we pressed the swifter they ran ; they went magnificently, far faster than the bulls ; we tried our utmost for a good mile, but could not overtake them.

Presently M'Kay cried out that Wawpooss was done,—poor beast, he was still weak from an attack of illness some days before. There was no time for questions ; putting spurs into the Bichon's yellow sides, I sailed away after the cows. On we went,—the heat intense, the dust perfectly blinding. Pulling hard, straining every nerve, Bichon drew nearer and nearer, his laziness quite forgotten in the excitement of the chase, but not for a moment could we get alongside. He began to flag,—it was a case of now or never. I stood in the stirrups and leant over his head, held my gun forward at arm's length, took the level of the cows, and fired into the heaving mass where the best ones seemed to be. To my joy

one of them instantly stopped ; the others rushed madly on their course, but she crawled slowly along, her bowels protruding from a great wound in her flank torn by the bullet of my No. 12.

Giving her a finishing shot, I halted a moment and considered what next to do. Of my two chief objects one was now attained: I had killed a fine cow for eating purposes—the bulls at this season being unfit for food. My other object was to get a large and perfectly unblemished head to carry home as a trophy; such heads, however, were not easily procurable, especially in that particular district, where the ground is so stony that the old bulls more than usually destroy their horns when rooting up the earth.*

All this time bands of buffalo were streaming past me; the plains were alive as far as the eye could reach. While debating whether or not to go on, I suddenly observed in one of the passing herds the very specimen I sought for,—‘an exceedingly fine, sleek, round-barrelled bull, not so large as some of the patriarchs, but with very long, perfect horns, and most luxuriant mane and beard.’ Hailing this welcome sight, I marked the noble animal for a prey: I remounted in haste, and again stirred up old Bichon, who, greatly refreshed by the halt, went on as gallantly as before.

Never did bull run more fast and strong. For two miles or more I stuck to him, but by no means could I get within fair shooting-distance. [It was interesting to ride in the midst of that vast black mass of buffaloes, for, as I went on, the scattered bands seemed more and more to unite, and I sometimes found myself moving in a sort of triangled enclosure with living walls around me, as the nearer animals strove to edge away on either hand, while the ranks were

* See foot-note, page 96.

closed in front, and ever-increasing numbers came thundering in the rear. As long as Bichon kept his footing there was little risk; the buffalo were thinking only of escape, the crowd was not dangerously large or dense, and there was plenty of room, for I was still on a gently undulating plain.]

At last my bull began to slacken his pace. By what strange instinct did he know that I had chosen him for my own?—the same band was still together, his companions were all with him, not one had yet quitted their ranks, yet with a sudden movement he sprang out from among them, and broke away by himself, rushing off at right angles through an opening in the crowd, and seeming to gather fresh speed as he ran on his separate career.

It was but for a while; he abruptly checked himself, faced round, and stood at bay. I closed on him, trying for a flank shot;—down went his head, onward he came in full charge. Knowing the uselessness of firing at a buffalo's forehead, I cantered out of his way; he followed me a few yards, then turned and resumed his course.

Another mile—again he slackened, breaking into a trot as he drew near to the top of a gently sloping rise, and there he took up his stand and once more came to bay. I approached till but a few yards were between me and him,—then up went his tail in sign of battle, down went his head for a charge; but this time I was too quick, the Bichon had slipped round him, and before he could make one step, I sent a bullet through his heart. He stopped, staggered a few paces, then fell to rise no more.

I got off the panting pony, and took a long look at my bull, feasting my eyes on his noble proportions as he lay lifeless on the crisp brown turf of that utterly deserted plain; then remounting, I began to make my way slowly home-

wards,—thirsty in the extreme, after all the heat and dust of the gallop, but with no hope of water till most of the distance had been retraced. On coming to the cow I had previously killed I found Nummé standing beside her: he had shot nothing, for Black had proved himself quite unmanageable. Preparing to leave the place, he laid his saddle on the cow's body to scare away the wolves after our departure; then, on my offer to stay with the horses, he set off alone in search of carts to carry in the meat or the trophies of the two slain buffaloes.

Growing tired of waiting, I followed in the same direction, and on presently coming in sight of the old hunter, a most amusing scene burst upon my view. He was stalking a young bull which had remained in a grassy hollow after the departure of the rest of the herd,—M'Kay, or one of the other men, having crippled it by a shot somewhere pretty close to the shoulder. Hid in the long herbage, Nummé had crept to within thirty yards of the wounded animal, and was now proceeding to open against it a sort of masked battery. Three times the report resounded, three times I saw the smoke curl upwards, but it always rose from a new place as the wary old man shifted his quarters, while the buffalo, mad with rage, leaped round and round, vainly trying to discover the aggressor. Not one of these balls had struck it, for Nummé, though reputed a good shot, was just now using the wonderful gun that had been straightened in the cart-wheel at Qu'appelle:—the sport seemed likely to be dangerous as well as tedious, for the buffalo was quite active enough for mischief, so I thought it better to ride in and finish matters with a rifle-bullet.

By this time Kline had brought one of the carts, and M'Kay coming also, the former remained to cut up the cow,

which was in tolerably fat condition, while the latter rode off with me in search of my bull, the cart following soon afterwards. We had much trouble to find this buffalo, for the run had been a long one, and towards the end over a rather broken country, but at last our search proved successful. M'Kay was surprised at the goodness of the horns; such fine ones, he assured me, were very seldom met with.* The head weighed heavily, as we found on lifting it into the cart after its separation from the carcase: we left that to the wolves and ravens, for it was too coarse and tough for human food.

A thunderstorm came on, but we escaped with a slight wetting, being near camp when it began: it only lasted two hours, and then the sun came glowing out with all its former intensity.

As I sat after dinner smoking at my tent-door, an old bull suddenly made his appearance, on which several of the men snatched up their guns and ran out into the plain to take a shot at him. I gave my rifle to Toma, who was starting with the rest, and the others allowing him first chance, he made two excellent shots, putting both bullets splendidly in at

* The horns measure 13 inches in length, and $8\frac{1}{2}$ in circumference at the base, and the distance from point to point is 17 inches. The points are sharp and absolutely perfect, which makes the merit of the head, for stronger (though not longer) horns, more or less damaged at the tips, are common enough everywhere. In no case, however, are the horns of this variety of the bison of very much greater size than those of the specimen referred to.

In Catlin's description of the formation of the large circular holes known as "wallows," in which the buffalo cool themselves in hot weather, he mentions a fact partly explanatory of the broken condition of the horns of the older bulls. Into some spot where the earth seems damp, "the enormous bull, lowered upon one knee, will plunge his horns and at last his head, driving up the earth, and soon making an excavation in the ground, into which the water filters from amongst the grass, forming for him, in a few

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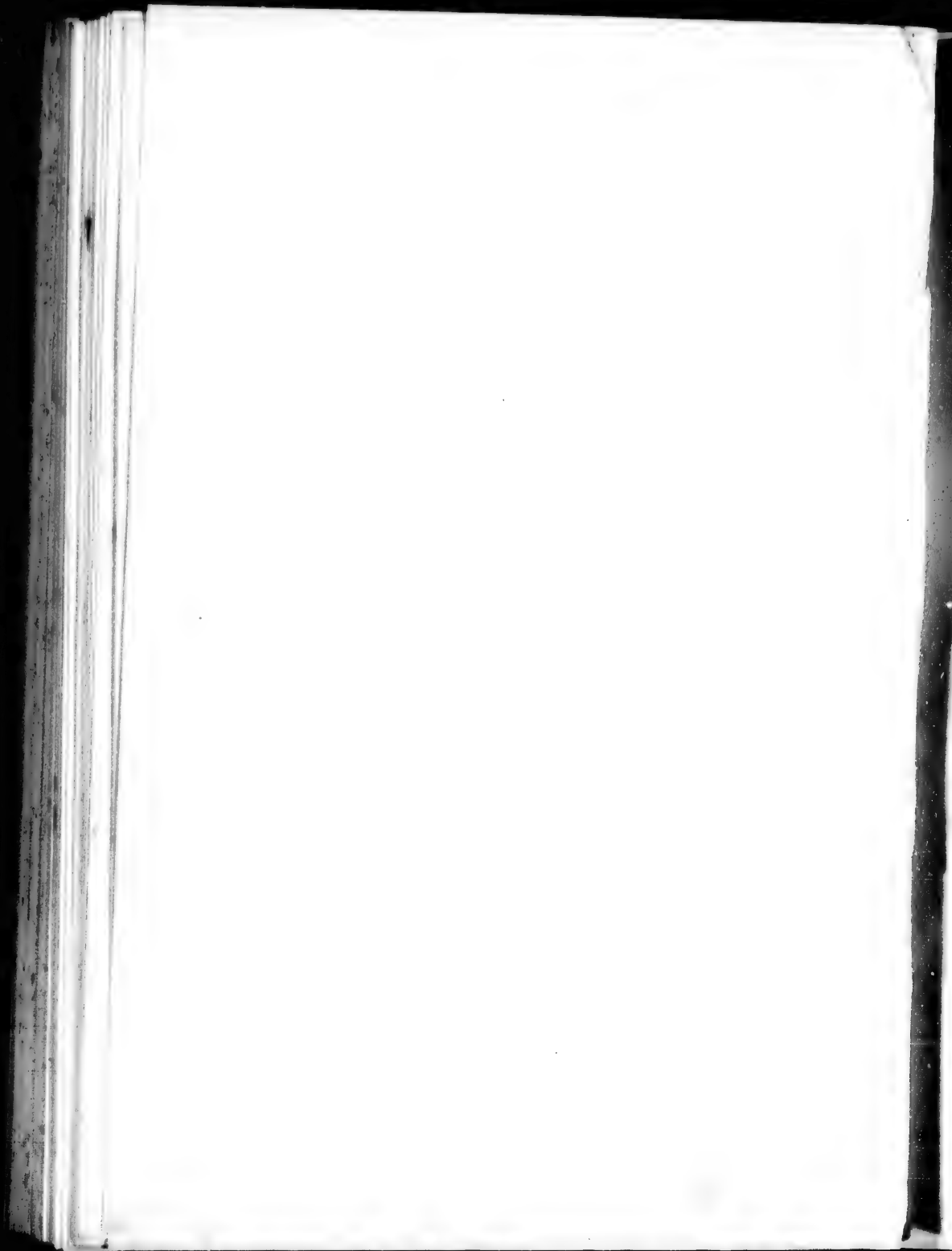
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HEAD OF A BUFFALO BULL. (See p. 96.)



140 paces. This checked the bull, and the other men running up poured a volley into it close at hand ; but, far from dropping, it continued to move on, though crippled with a broken foreleg—a thing most disabling to a buffalo, owing to the weight of his immense fore quarters. Intending to reload, my men now discovered that in their hurry they had taken no ammunition. I saw what was happening, and came out with one of the smooth-bores to assist them.

Going pretty near the bull, I fired two shots, aiming just behind his shoulder ; both went rather high, but either should have brought him down ; still he stood as firmly as before. Some one then said, "Try him in the flank : " I did not believe it would answer, but I tried it, with no result, however, but to make the horrid scene still more disgusting to me. Next time I went quite close to him, and aimed very carefully at his heart. No other shot was needed ; over he rolled, and expired without a struggle or a groan.

This was an instance of the well-known fact that when an animal does not immediately drop to a body-shot in the regions of the heart, he will bear bullet after bullet without

moments, a cool and comfortable bath, into which he plunges like a hog in his mire. In this delectable laver he throws himself flat upon his side, and forcing himself violently around . . . he ploughs up the ground by his rotary motion, sinking himself deeper and deeper in the ground. . . . It is generally the leader of the herd that takes upon him to make this excavation . . . having cooled his sides . . . he stands in the pool till inclination induces him to step out and give place to the next in command . . . until the whole herd will pass through in turn ; each one throwing his body around in a similar manner."—CATLIN, *North Am. Ind.*, vol. i. pp. 249, 250.

It is easy to see that the larger and stronger bulls must soon destroy the sharpness of their horns when beginning these excavations, especially where the soil is of a stony nature not merely on the elevated ground but even in the damper hollows.

flinching or sinking, until the very brain or heart is penetrated. Perhaps when the first shock fails to prostrate the nerves it only serves to dull them, producing insensibility to every succeeding shock that does not actually ruin one of the vital organs.

No fewer than fourteen bullets had pierced this buffalo. Toma's rifle-balls had both struck him among the front ribs, and were lodged close together under the skin of his flank far back on the opposite side. They had not touched a bone, and were so perfect that I loaded with them again. The bull proved to be in capital condition, with plenty of fat, which came in usefully, as we were much in want of grease at that particular time. Altogether we had killed six buffaloes in course of the day. Besides the two killed by myself, there were—the bull just mentioned, another stalked and shot by M'Kay after taking Wawpooss home, another killed by Short, and the young one that Nummé had persecuted. It would have been easy to kill a far larger number had there been any object in doing so.

M'Kay congratulated me on shooting such a good cow, besides getting so fine-headed a bull, at my very first attempt with the great herd, left as I had been entirely to my own resources. Nevertheless, I was far from pleased with myself, and thus did I record my feelings—'I find myself awkward in managing a gun on a galloping horse. I do not succeed well in urging my horse close to a buffalo, and shooting it at the gallop. I can kill the buffaloes I want in my own way, but I wish to do it in the best way. Ought I to content myself with success in my own fashion, or should I aim at perfection?—the latter, I think.'

Sunday, July 17th.—We were camped in a hollow beside a deep narrow lake about half-a-mile long, with low hills

immediately behind us that gradually raised themselves into a higher range. At dinner time our camp was surprised by a very alarming invasion. We were in our tents, thinking of nothing less than any disturbance; the most perfect quiet prevailed. In an instant, without the slightest warning, a storm of noise burst upon us,—bells jingled, whips cracked,—the tramp of galloping horses resounded close at hand. I leapt up to seize my rifle,—it was not there; I hastened out to my men, and found them equally defenceless, for all guns had been laid aside on account of the Sunday rest. A strange and unwelcome sight greeted our astonished eyes. Widely apart, extended in a semicircle which completely hemmed us in, a number of armed and mostly naked warriors were rushing down the slope, urging their horses to furious speed with whip and heel. "The Blackfeet!" said my men, and we prepared for the worst. The invaders were almost upon us, a few yards only lay between us and them, when suddenly they checked their speed, stared at us for a moment, then trotted peacefully up with smiling faces, offering the most friendly greetings, which my men heartily reciprocated.

The mystery was soon explained. Our visitors were a party of Cree Indians and half-breeds from Fort Carlton, who were camping on the other side of the range, under the leadership of a hunter named Tait. One of their men, it appeared, while going back for a broken cart, had noticed a couple of our horses which had strayed to the top of a neighbouring hill. Supposing us to be Blackfeet, with whom the Crees were just going to war, they planned to surprise us,—and so indeed they did. Each man had his mouth full of bullets, ready for action, and most of them were nearly stark naked; everything had been skilfully planned, some of the number

had been expressly told off to drive away our horses. They would have shown no mercy, I was informed, to a Blackfoot party: so at least it was said at the time; Tait, however, afterwards assured me that he had ordered his men not to shoot even Blackfeet, unless positively obliged.

There was clearly something wrong in our arrangements. If these Carlton people had been enemies, not one of us could have escaped; even had they spared our lives they would have carried off all our horses. Had they come by night we should have been ready for them, two watchers being always posted during the hours of darkness; after sunrise, however, the whole camp slept unguarded, offering a too easy chance to any lurking horse-thieves. Some change was so evidently required that, much as I disliked interfering with his management of the party, I called M'Kay to a consultation, and it was settled between us that henceforth the horses were to be watched incessantly, not merely by night but by day.

If only for one reason, Tait's coming might well be counted fortunate. Through him we learned that both at Fort Pitt and Fort Edmonton the inhabitants were nearly starving, as the buffalo were far distant, and the Blackfeet, afraid of the Crees, with whom they had just begun hostilities, were not bringing in meat according to their usual custom. Had we gone directly to Fort Pitt, as I had of late been planning, we should have been unable to get supplies to carry us to the Rocky Mountains, and our stock of pemmican having run short, the journey would almost certainly have come to an untimely conclusion.

I now decided to go and camp near Tait, hunt buffalo in that neighbourhood, and employ the women who accompanied his party to dry a large store of meat for our pur-

poses. This suited me in another respect, for it brought us nearer to a hill that was reported to abound with grisly bears, a few of which I confidently hoped to secure.

Our camp was surrounded by dozens of wolves devouring the remains of the buffaloes. Some one suddenly proposing to give them a fright, we all joined in the fun, and sallied forth armed with whatever came handiest, I with the swingle-tree of the waggon, Duncan with a long stick, M'Kay with a log of wood, M'Beath with the tent-pin mallet; then spreading out crescent-ways, we ran down the bank of the lake, trying to force the wolves to meet us, or else to betake themselves to the water.

Away we rush under the clear moonlight, the pace terrific, M'Kay leading; M'Beath steps into a hole, and measures his long length on the ground; some fall over him, others keep their course, bounding down the slope with shouts and tremendous peals of laughter.

The wolves managed to slip through our ranks, but they had a very narrow escape. All night long Short amused himself by chasing them with a hatchet, which he hurled most vigorously at such as came within distance: he did no execution that time, however, though a most splendid shot with every sort of missile. He was a wonderfully active young fellow, surpassed by few in feats of skill and cleverness. After Tait left us the men began to play at a certain game, in which, the players being blindfolded and playing in turn, the object was to be the first to break with an axe a marrow-bone laid on the grass three paces off,—the breaker of the bone to get its contents for his own benefit. Several attempts having been made all round, Short finally proved the successful competitor. He had cunningly taken off his moccasins, then groped about with his feet till he found a tuft

of grass that he knew to be near the marrow-bone, thus discovering the right direction for the winning effort.

This morning M'Kay came upon a sleeping wolf, and hit it so violently on the ribs with a heavy stone, that the wretched creature rolled over as if dead, and blood spurted from its jaws. It summoned up strength, however, to scramble to its feet, and ran off in time to escape a second visitation.

July 18th.—The buffaloes were still all round us in scattered bands, so after breakfast I shouldered my rifle, and walked a mile or two alone into the prairie in hopes of shooting another fat cow. The only herd I could at all approach was feeding in the open plain, but a slight undulation enabled me to get within 150 yards; nearer I could not go, being already just on the edge of the wind. The cows unluckily were at the farther side, a good fifty paces beyond the bulls; still I thought it possible to kill one, but before I had got fair aim they took the alarm and began to move off, upon which I rather too hastily fired both barrels at the slowly-retreating animals. There was no apparent result; and then I found myself in a difficulty, for the old bulls, instead of moving off too, remained on the spot, bellowing, pawing the ground, and looking fiercely about them. I could not load while stretched flat on the turf; if I raised myself in the least, I came into view; if I lay still, I was equally sure to be discovered, owing to a shift in the wind, which now blew towards them. After a moment's thought I resolved to load at all hazards; so, laying everything ready, I raised myself and loaded as quickly as possible. The buffaloes must have seen me, but none of them showed symptoms of charging, and, as nothing more could be done with the cows, I was glad to leave the bulls without further disturbance. They were savage and dangerous at that season, but, from

what I afterwards heard, I doubt if they ever attack unless very closely approached or driven to bay.*

While coming home I saw an old wolf a long way off, and saluted him with both barrels. One bullet passed close to his tail, if it did not actually graze it, evidently to his great astonishment, for he doubtless thought himself safe at such a distance, having no experience of guns that were dangerous at two or three hundred yards.

On my return we struck tents and made a move for Tait's encampment, which was situated at a place called Cherry Bush, nine or ten miles away towards the other side of the range. As we marched over a shoulder of these hills,—the "Roasting Hills" by name,—we passed by many bands of buffalo, but would not disturb them for fear of spoiling Tait's hunting arrangements.

A badger was foolish enough to show itself in the open plain: as a matter of course, all the men immediately pursued it, Short, as usual, among the foremost, leaping round and round, pelting it with pieces of dry buffalo dung, and out of some half-dozen shots never once failing to hit its pointed nose. Kline at last ran in and slew the badger with a long stick,—a needless act unfortunately, for the poor harmless animal proved to be much too thin for eating.

Two or three cows then came past. As they were so close that we could not interfere with Tait by following them, M'Kay started to run them on Black, whom he happened to be riding; I started also, though only mounted on Morgan, who was not then reckoned among our buffalo-run-

* "In the rutting season the males fight against each other with great fury, and at that period it is very dangerous to approach them. The bison is, however, in general, a shy animal, and takes to flight instantly on winding an enemy. . . . It is dangerous for the hunter to show himself after having wounded one."—RICHARDSON, *Faun. Bor.-Am.*, vol. i. p. 291.

ners. Suddenly Black's girthing got unloosed, and the saddle slipping back, he began to kick so violently that M'Kay was obliged to jump off without delay. On seeing this I halted, knowing that Black would go nearly mad if another horse passed him, so the cows went away unmolested.

This happened near Tait's camp. Meanwhile a half-breed, who had a wonderful power—magical, some thought it—of guiding buffalo in any direction that he pleased, was driving, or rather leading, a great band of bulls and cows to the very tents, and the runners had just begun to set out in pursuit.

On our arrival at Cherry Bush, we camped upon a sandy hillock near a small swampy pool, about a quarter of a mile from the Carlton encampment. Several of the hunters presently came to see us. Tait himself paid me a special visit, accompanied by his eldest daughter, a very pretty child of some six years old,—a charming little girl, whose bright black eyes and pleasant smiles seemed to bring sunbeams with them to my solitary tent.

After dinner a large band of buffalo appeared from over the hill. We prepared to run them. One of the Indians, a very bold intelligent young man named Năpěsskēs, asked leave to ride Black, which, being arranged, I set off with him myself, riding the Bichon, as was now my ordinary custom.

For half-an-hour we had to wait in a hollow till the signal was given, then we rushed from our concealment. Black went right to the front, and Bichon kept well with him so far, but the old pony was singularly restive and excited all the while, and for a minute or two I could scarcely get him to close. When at length alongside, I found great difficulty in making out the cows, as there were very few to be seen and it was hard to distinguish them from the young bulls.

As for bulls, one might have shot them right and left by dozens. At last I got a chance at a cow, but missed her ;—no one, till he tries it, can fancy how hard it is to shoot a galloping buffalo from a galloping horse.

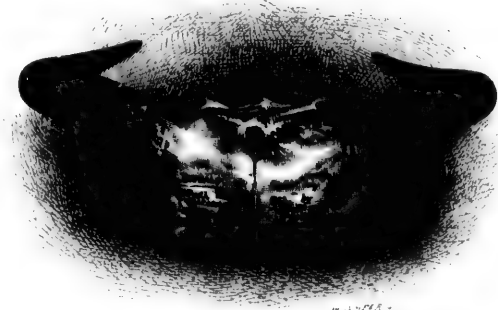
The buffaloes were now running round me in every quarter, the herd for the most part broken into small lots separated by trifling intervals from one another ; and, having after some trouble reloaded without stopping the pony, I set myself to follow a mixed band of cows and bulls, of various ages. As I came opposite Tait's camp I met the Indian who had borrowed Black, he laughingly held up two fingers to show that he had killed a pair of cows. He was very clever at signs. We had previously passed a peculiar-looking skull with slight and much-curved horns, placed by itself on the ground, and no sooner did I notice it, than he made me understand that this was not the head of a bull, but of an *ox*—a variety of somewhat rare occurrence ; that he shot it himself ; and that it had stood half as high again as a male of the ordinary description.

Scarce slackening speed while passing Napesskes, I continued to urge on the Bichon, but his hardest efforts failed to place me alongside the cows. I then tried two long shots ; both were fruitless ; so I drew rein a little, and settled my pony into a steady gallop, resolved to follow to the death.

'How they did run ! After two miles (due west) Bichon began to gain a little on them ; I urged him, and he nearly closed. I fired at a fine cow ; she staggered, but went on, the blood pouring from a wound high in her shoulder. The shock seemed to sicken her, she slackened ; I pressed on to give her the other barrel ; Bichon lengthened his stride, we went sailing down a gently sloping hill. We got close to the

cow. I leant forward to give her the finisher,—crash! down came Bichon on the top of his head.

‘My gun flew yards away; I shot through the air and fell in front of the horse; he rolled over and over, and then came right upon me in such a manner that my left leg, spur uppermost, was pinned under him, and my head lay between his hind and fore feet. I expected instant death, but the good God protected me, and after a minute of terrible suspense I got clear of the horse’s hoofs, and jumped up in time to catch his bridle as he rose. Had he been a violent beast like Black, I must have been killed. As it was, no injury was done to either man, gun, or horse, except that my elbow got a trifling cut.



SKULL OF A BUFFALO OX.

‘Leaping on Bichon’s back, I went on after the cow, but another mile convinced me I could not catch her, as she was going as fast as the others, and had gained so long a start. Her well-grown calf was running at her side, as it had done the whole time. A wolf was following close behind her, smelling her blood and anticipating a prey, which he is not likely to get, for the chances are she will recover.

'I then turned towards camp, and the provoking Bichon, who had gone very soberly since his fall, began to pull hard and neigh. It was fortunate that he was so fond of his home, for I had great doubts about the position of the camp, and he encouraged me by always pulling in what I also thought to be the right direction. He was not wrong. On getting to a knoll I had been making for, Tait's camp appeared exactly in front, and I was soon at my own tent-door.'

CHAPTER IX.

CHERRY BUSH, THE BAD HILL, FORT CARLTON.

JULY 19th.—We busied ourselves, this excessively hot morning, in making preparations for a hunt on the range of hills where grisly bears were reported to be so numerous. I determined to take only some of my men, as there was full employment for the rest of the party, during the short time we were likely to be absent, in killing buffalo to increase our miserably scanty store of dried provisions.

It was about 1 o'clock when we set out. The Bichon carried me as usual, Nummé rode Nez-blanc, Duncan was mounted on the Gris. Napesskes, that clever good-looking In'an, accompanied us in the capacity of guide. By birth he was really of French half-breed origin, but having always lived with the Indians he completely resembled them in his looks and habits, and nobody much remembered about his European blood. To honour the occasion he had arrayed himself in a new coat,—no less than a superfine blue cloth surtout, with gilt buttons, and a high velvet collar of an anciently fashionable cut ; but instead of trowsers he wore leather leggings of the Indian pattern, which reached but a certain way up his limbs, and when the wind blew back his coat skirts there was a strange exhibition of rich mahogany-coloured skin. His long, straight, black hair was twisted into a quantity of tails bound round with coils of brass wire. He it was that

the day before had borrowed Black for a run with the buffalo, but for this journey he was mounted on quiet little Spot, as different a sort of steed as one could well imagine. Kline completed the party, driving a lightly-laden cart drawn by the horse we brought from the White Horse Plains—Blond, *alias* M'Gillis, the handsome and still fat chestnut with the silky flowing mane and tail.

For three miles our road ran due west over the country I had crossed in my latest run ; after that we partly altered our course and tended more in a southerly direction.

A cabree appeared on the rise of a little hill, and came forward to stare at us ; I dismounted, and gave him a couple of shots, killing him with the second at 120 yards. He was a three-year-old male with but a poor head, not having yet attained to his full growth.

Before we had gone much farther the country entirely changed in its aspect ; instead of half-dry salt swamps, with here and there a sandy knoll, we now came to a wide arid prairie, level in character but rising occasionally into hills of trifling elevation. Far as the eye could reach these plains were covered with troops of buffalo, thousands and thousands were constantly in sight. I might have shot plenty of old bulls, but it would have been mere cruel butchery ; and the cows, as usual, were very hard to approach. I did not wish to over-tire Bichon by running him, and when one attempts an open advance on foot—concealment on such ground being impossible—the buffalo always keep sheering off as soon as you get within 200 yards of the nearest. If you follow, they merely repeat the move, and always manage to preserve the same distance. I dismounted, and tried one or two long shots at cows, but without any perceptible result.

After perhaps twenty miles' travelling under the excessive heat of the sun, we at length beheld, at no great distance before us, our destined camping-place—the Bad Hill. This ominous name relates to some great misfortune that there befell the Crees or Assiniboinés, but the tradition is lost, or at any rate was unknown to my people. It is a range of hills, or rather one continuous hill, extending about ten miles in length ; in height it does not exceed a few hundred feet, and its outline is plain and rounded ; it is scored by many deep ravines, for the most part overgrown with poplars and thick brushwood, which form a favourite haunt of the grisly bear.

A fatal accident happened at this place about a year before my visit. Two Indians, while gathering berries on the hill, were attacked by a grisly who was lying concealed among the bushes. One man he instantly knocked down, then seized the other and killed him : meanwhile the first succeeded in making his escape. The Indians are afraid to stop in one particular glen, which is very much frequented by these savage bears ; we, however, had no hesitation about camping there, as it had the advantage of a remarkably fine spring of water.

Besides the risk of lurking grislies, which did not much trouble us, there was the far more serious risk of Blackfoot war-parties, for this hill lay right in their accustomed path. If they had come—'Napesskes's neat, boat-shaped skull would have been shorn of its covering, the Crees and Black-foot being now at war ; our horses, too, would have been taken—if nothing worse.'

Between us and the Bad Hill, as it first appeared in view, stretched a flat valley of fine level prairie land, to which we descended along a gentle slope, and after two or three miles'

travelling arrived at the stream which flows beneath the hill—the Eagle Creek again, at that point not far from where it takes its rise. The water was brackish, just as it was in the lower part of its course. We crossed it easily, and camped about 8 P.M. in the woody ravine which has been already mentioned.

July 20th.—Rising before daybreak I set out with Nummé and Napesskes to look for bears. We rode in an easterly direction, and passed through several glens without seeing any living creature, until, in one deep narrow dell, we came suddenly upon a small female deer,—a “roe” my people called it. She slowly approached us, eyeing us with the prettiest timidly inquisitive glances, till on getting very close her keen nostrils told her a truer tale than her eyes had skill for, and away she bounded and hid herself in the leafy shades.

We had nearly reached the farthest ravine towards the hill's north-eastern extremity, when we at last beheld some of the objects of our search: a large female grisly bear and her cub walking about in the open, on high bare ground, not far from the upper part of a dense-growing thicket of brushwood. We immediately gave chase to cut them off from the covert: they were too quick for us, and made good their retreat into its deep recesses long before our arrival within rifle-range. On this Nummé and I dismounted, and crossing the little stream that ran along the bottom of the glen, now immediately beneath us, we began to ascend the opposite bank near the thicket where the bears were sheltering. Suddenly Nummé called out—Shoot! and on looking round I saw the large bear sitting up on its haunches, full in view, but it was not less than 150 yards from the place where we stood. The light was indifferent, and the large rifle in my hand was quite unfamiliar to me, having only once been tried

at all, and never at long range,—I would not attempt the shot at such a distance ; meanwhile the grisly turned back into the bush and began to cross the ravine.

We returned to the side we had come from, and rejoined Napesskes, who had posted himself at the edge of a bank that commanded a clear view for some way down the descent. Presently a buffalo bull came rushing out from below, and Napesskes said that he saw the bear strike it as it passed. A minute or two afterwards appeared the bear itself. It stopped on a little knoll right below us and about 100 yards off, reared itself on its hind legs, and swayed slowly from side to side, staring at us and trying to get our wind. Quickly putting aside the heavy rifle, I took my favourite Purdey, and fired. The first shot missed ; the bear turned itself half round ; before it got its forefeet to the earth I struck it hard and fair with the second shot. It nearly fell over, then partly recovered : we expected it to charge, but with no attempt to do so, it rushed away into the thickest of the bushes.

At that moment Nummé (who had gone to the opposite side) saw a bear running rapidly past, and fired both barrels of my No. 12 at it, hitting it, as he rather thought, with one ball. We rode across and joined him.

‘ We were now on a steep bank, with thick underwood beneath us, and could see the bushes moving to and fro as the wounded bear writhed and raged in his pain ; we could also hear its heavy panting, but the beast itself was quite concealed. Presently we heard it splashing in the water just below ; then it lay still, and neither shots nor stones could move it.

‘ We went down close to the thicket where it was, and watched for a long time. Nummé said that it was lying hid, crouching in readiness to clutch any one who came within

reach, and if (as he supposed) it was a female with a cub, it would be doubly savage and dangerous. He assured me it would not do to go into the bush, which, besides being twice as high as a man, was as dense as a common thorn hedge. I confess I should have been sorry to go in, but had the hunters advised doing so, of course I should have gone. Napesskes afterwards said that he would have been willing, but that Nummé objected. As the former speaks nothing but Cree, and made no signs, I could not say what might have been the extent of his readiness. To go in appeared to me sheer madness.

'We at length determined to leave the place, and return in the evening, or next morning, by which time the bear would be dead, or at any rate stiff from its wound; so we rode back to camp and breakfasted.

'Afterwards we rode along the whole length of the hill, exploring all the valleys, but saw nothing except the small deer which somewhat answer to our "roe." They are called "Black-tailed Cabrees" by the Indians, but improperly, for the cabree is an antelope, and does not shed its horns as this deer does.*

'There was an extensive view from the top of the hill, though the day unfortunately was not very clear. The Bad Hill faces to the north-west. Running south-west is the long range called the Roasting Hill, near which Tait was camped. Between the western extremities of these ranges there lies a small lake, out of which flows the Eagle Creek. A long way to the south-east is a larger piece of water called the Little Devil's Lake. This Bad Hill is the farthest point to which the Crees and Stonies [Assiniboines] ever come, as

* *Cervus macrotis*—*The Black-tailed Deer, or Mule Deer, or Jumping Deer* . . . called by the Canadian voyageurs "*chevreuil*."—RICHARDSON, *Faun. Bor.-Am.*, vol. i. p. 254.

there is no wood for an immense distance beyond it, when journeying in the Blackfoot direction. Captain Blakiston hunted over the neighbouring plains, but it is believed that no European (not a resident in the country) has been on the hill but myself. Arrowsmith's map [1859] is utterly wrong hereabouts. It places Eagle Hill Creek about forty miles north-west from its real position.*

Returning in the evening we perceived a few buffalo feeding on a strip of rugged broken ground that stretched along the foot of the hill and formed an intermediate belt between the higher and lower levels. I went towards them alone, and had no difficulty in making my stalk, crawling under cover of a little rocky knoll till I got within range of the cows that seemed to be in fairest order. I fired at a rather good one, and hit her low on the flank; at that instant another shot struck her from the opposite side, the two reports almost mingling in one. It was Napesskes, who having gone forward in search of buffalo some while before, had, by a strange coincidence, stalked and shot at the same cow that I was stalking, neither of us having the least idea as to his fellow-hunter's proceedings.

The wounded cow staggered almost to falling; she had strength, however, to move heavily on. Napesskes went in

* I am inclined to think that the Eagle Hill Creek of Arrowsmith's map is a totally different stream from that referred to above, which I suspect was erroneously designated by Nummé (whose acquaintance with the district was scanty enough)—unless, indeed, the stream possesses more names than one, as not unfrequently happens. Finding myself unable to lay down the localities in this neighbourhood in a manner correspondent with the description in my journal, I fear that some error must exist among the original notes themselves,—through a slip of the pen, or, more probably, from misinformation. Nevertheless, I offer the particulars as they stand, hoping to draw the attention of future travellers to the subject.

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pursuit, and I was just in time to get a shot at another cow while she was in the act of disappearing over the knoll, and my bullet raked her from stern to stem. She stopped, crawled on a few yards, then Nummé finished her. Napesskes meanwhile was following the wounded cow down into the plain, and as soon as she arrived there a bull came forward to protect her, keeping constantly at her side, and putting himself always between her and danger's way. For a good while he would not be driven off, and Napesskes, with laudable humanity, refrained from killing him; at length, however, the skilful hunter managed to scare him away, and then very easily secured his companion. We found her to be tolerably fat,—a fortunate circumstance for us, for our provisions were nearly all expended.

'It is very cool at night at our elevated camp, though the days are so hot; and this is a comfort, as the cold keeps the mosquitoes down,—indeed I am almost beginning to forget the existence of the plagues. This respite, and the good spring water, have made me feel much better than for some time past. There is great scarcity of pure water in the central country. From Crow-wing to Fort Ellice we did not see a single spring. There is a fine, though small, running stream flowing into the Qu'appelle near where we crossed, but from that place to this we have found nothing at all resembling it. Our drink has been either swamp water, bad tasted and full of insects, or else muddy river water. Wild raspberries, strawberries, and gooseberries, grow abundantly on the Bad Hill.'

July 21st.—Again I rose at daybreak, and set out in search of the wounded bear. All the party went with me except Kline, who was to follow us with the cart, when he had finished packing up the tent and the rest of the baggage. On

reaching the ravine where we expected to find the grisly, Nummé, Duncan, and I, crossed over to the place where it had last been moving among the bushes, while Napesskes stopped on the bank I had shot from, to report if anything broke out that way. Leaving Duncan with the horses, lest they should take alarm through some glimpse of the lurking enemy, Nummé and I then entered the thicket on our knees, creeping along side by side, our weapons on full cock,—I carrying the large Dickson rifle, he bringing forward one of my twelve-bore Purdey guns.

‘The bushes seemed almost impenetrably thick, but after crawling through the outer brush we found a sort of path about two yards wide. It led to a small pool of water over-arched with thick brushwood, and beside it we saw the grisly bear lying dead on its back, with its legs outstretched and its bowels protruding from a hole in the side of its belly.

‘Nummé, who, as yet, had supposed it to be a female, now held up his hands in surprise. “C’est un taureau!” he exclaimed; and sure enough it was, being a male not quite full grown,—about three years old. The tracks of a cub were stamped in the mud all round, most singularly like a child’s footmarks. This brought such thoughts to my mind that I felt almost glad the little bear and its mother had escaped. She had probably slipped away in the bush, while the male, already there, showed himself and got shot.

‘At first, on seeing the large wound in the bear’s side, I thought Nummé must have hit it with the twelve-bore, but we soon discovered the small round hole where my conical ball had entered, on the right side above the hip, spreading in its passage through the animal’s body so as to tear a great ragged hole on the opposite side. Nummé kept all along assuring me that the shot could not have been his, but I

thought he might be saying this from mere politeness. Now, however, there could be no mistake, for though a small bullet may make a large hole, a large bullet cannot make a small one.

‘We skinned the bear and took his skull.* No object could be more appallingly hideous than a fresh-skinned bear. He is like a monstrous mis-shapen man, of giant strength and devilish ferocity,—a true Hans of Iceland. His head especially, all raw and grinning, is “a thing to dream of, not to tell.”’

Close by the carcase grew a profusion of wild mint, the very scent of which seemed to draw ugliness from its disgusting neighbourhood. I often used to put mint leaves into my tea to correct the taste of the foul swamp-water ; I never did so again. “From the eater came forth meat, from the strong came sweetness,” was no true proverb for me.

The skinning operations well over, we breakfasted. Then, having been joined by Kline, with his cart, we set out on our return to Cherry Bush. As we were travelling along, we came upon a new-born buffalo calf : we merely looked at it and went our way, leaving it quietly crouching in the grass. The mother cow, however, seeing us so near its resting-place, came running from the herd, and full of the notion that her little one was being carried off, the poor foolish creature never went to see if it were still where she had hidden it, but kept following on and on, watching all our movements with an air of most pitiable anxiety. In vain we tried to drive her back, she would not be driven, she seemed incapable of fear ; but after a long time, she quitted us of her own

* Both skin and skull were brought safely to this country. The former measures 5 feet 8 inches in its present rather dried condition. Some large old grislies reach 8 feet, or even 9 feet, in length.

accord, and slowly retraced her steps : we hoped that she found the little calf alive and safe and well, but most probably the wolves had devoured it while she was far away.

The buffalo were trooping all over the plains, not in dense enormous herds, but broken into innumerable small straggling bands. I was more than ever struck with the likeness of the old bulls to lions, as we saw them standing apart on the low ridges and sandy knolls, eyeing us from afar with an air of savage watchfulness,—each neck crested with a luxuriant mane, swelled into greater largeness by the hump beneath it, each short, tufted tail held straight out from the body in bold and lion-like defiance. In one scattered herd I noticed an animal towering far above the rest ; it was one of those glossy, flat-sided, long-legged oxen already spoken of. They fall into this condition in calf-hood, either from the attacks of wolves, or from measures taken by the Indians. As these cattle are rare, besides being the best for meat, I began to run him, wishing to secure a fine specimen ; however, I soon gave him up, for he had so long a start and went so well that I could not hope to overtake him without the risk of losing my people, and perhaps falling among hostile war-parties. When nearer home I ran a cow, and shot her very easily ; she was poor and lean, which accounted for her bad running, so we only took her tongue.

About 2 o'clock we reached Cherry Bush. Just as dinner was over, a few bulls rushed past close by the tents, and some being wanted at the time, we all turned out to shoot them. I fired at a young bull galloping hard, about 200 yards off, and broke his foreleg with the Purdey rifle ; I then chased him Dickson in hand, blazing at him as I ran in dreadfully out of breath, and by chance hitting him in the ribs. It was a mere graze, and he would have escaped,

for I had no ammunition with me, but M'Kay and Kline coming up at the moment followed on in pursuit, and the former stopped him with a well-planted bullet.

It was lucky that the bear was dead when Nummé and I crawled up to him, for, on shooting off the Dickson rifle, both barrels hung fire badly, having been too long loaded, and much shaken on the saddle. The check would have thrown out my aim at the critical moment, and we should have been at the mercy of the grisly, who, in such a thicket, and at such close quarters, would have killed us both, unless the old hunter had shot a good deal better than he had lately made a habit of doing.

I was vexed to find that my absence had lost me the chance of a larger bear than the one I had just brought home. It came prowling about the hunter's camp the very day we started for the Bad Hill, and Tait, while riding alone, discovered it in a swamp, and ran it to bay in a small piece of water, where he shot it without difficulty. It was a full-grown male, and very thin.

M'Kay, by my permission, had been giving Morgan a trial with the buffalo. He found my gallant pony both fast and fearless, and as good as any trained runner, and succeeded in shooting five cows off his back in a single race. M'Beath shot two off Wawpooss (who was now himself again), and shot the same number off La Framboise,—an animal who went well while he lasted, but very soon shut up. We were thus plentifully supplied with meat, which the Carlton women were engaged in drying for us.

[During our stay my people made a set of cart harness in a very singular manner. They carved it out in its proper shape on the very body of a bull as he lay back upwards, and then lifted it up complete in a single piece. The sun

quickly dried the raw hide, and it turned into the toughest of leather. They also made some of the long lines that are used for so many purposes. These they carved out in the same fashion from the hind quarters of a bull, by forming a series of spirally-enlarging circular cuts, passing the knife under them, and lifting off the hide exactly like the skin of a well-peeled apple or orange. The ends were then attached to two stakes, between which the strip being tightly stretched, it soon became a straight and perfect line. When running buffalo, the hunter generally carries a line of this sort coiled up and tucked under his belt, one end being fastened to the horse's head. Should a fall take place, as it frequently does when badger-holes are numerous, the line uncoils itself from the rider's belt as he is quitting the saddle, and trails upon the ground, making it easier for him to recover his horse.]



BUFFALO-HIDE LINE.

July 22d.—The hunters were starting to run buffalo : so I had Morgan saddled, and went with them. The brave little horse dashed to the front, perfectly obedient, full of life and spirit. I singled out the leading band of cows and tried hard to close for a shot, but it was long ere I could approach them, though the pony was straining every nerve and going quite

magnificently. After two miles of it they showed signs of failing, and the poorer ones stopped. I cheered on little Morgan and urged him to his utmost ; he made new efforts, dashed forward, and brought me near one of the finest, one of a sleek pair that kept well before the rest of the band. My wrist was tired from holding a heavy five-chambered carbine, —I missed the first shot, but, closing with the cow again, I gave her a second ; it took hard on her and she nearly stopped.

Looking on her as safe, I followed her companion, and ran her for some distance ; but finding the chase likely to be too long, I returned to the wounded one I had left behind.

She had partly recovered, and galloped off in a way that surprised me, however I soon overtook her ; she turned short round, and came to bay beside a pool of water among the sand-hills. I stopped my pony. The cow instantly made a slow but vicious charge, then resumed her former position ; and this manœuvre she repeated whenever I drew up in hopes to get a steady shot :—there she stood, her head incessantly towards me, her eyes glowing with rage.*

Again and again I tried to pass round her, but she always baffled me by quickly revolving in her place, sometimes trotting forward a few steps as if intending to charge ; meanwhile my beautiful pony, brave as a lion, seemed ready to rush against her very horns, pressing towards her even, so that I was obliged to restrain his ardour.

But the end came at last. Taking a moment when the buffalo lowered her head, I gave her a shot somewhere in the

* Why is it, among all sorts of animals, that when brought to bay some individual ones express such more than common fury in their eyes ? Hers were like emerald furnaces : no bull ever looked so fierce as she did. Of the many stags I have shot, I remember but two that glared with this remarkable expression of intense, everlasting hatred.

neck or chest. The sudden stroke confused her, she half-turned, and offered me a fairer chance; then I shot her through the heart, and the gallant cow fell dead, with her face still to the foe.

Tying my neck handkerchief to her horns to scare the wolves away, I returned for a cart, and M'Kay and Short getting into it, we went off together to fetch her home. Morgan had done enough, so I took Vermont instead. He was 'as idiotical as usual,' going out reluctantly but pulling all the way back, hurting my hands most cruelly by this perverse conduct, for they were blistered from buffalo-running without gloves under a scorching summer sun.

After some search we found the cow. She was surrounded with wolves, but none of them had dared to brave the terrors of my black and white handkerchief. While the cutting-up proceeded, I hid myself in a sand hollow close by, and fired at several of these greedy sneaking thieves, killing one—a large female; and on the way home I struck another.—'The wolves are detestable wretches, but do more good than harm to man, seldom attacking horses or human beings, and devouring carcasses and offal that would breed a pestilence if left to rot.* It is their habit to hang round the buffalo herds, preying on any young or sickly animals that fall into their clutches, but carefully shunning the horns of the strong old bulls. A young calf separated from its mother stands but a poor chance. That very day we saw a tolerably large one

* These wolves were chiefly of the smaller kind—*Canis latrans*—the *Prairie Wolf*. *Cased Wolves*—Hudson's Bay Co. Lists. *Meesteh-chaggoneesh*—Cree Indians. (The length of these wolves is about three feet; that of the large wolves—*Canis lupus*,—upwards of four feet.) RICHARDSON, *Faun. Bor.-Am.*, vol. i. pp. 73, 74. The great wolf is said to be very good eating (like the dog, which is a favourite Indian food), but the smaller wolf is considered uneatable.

pursued by a band of wolves in a string of a quarter of a mile, each following at a few yards' interval behind the other. The foremost, considerably in advance, was close upon the calf, which was bleeding at the nose and throat ;--another minute would have settled its destiny, but M'Kay galloped up and overtook the wolf, too busy to notice him, and shot it in the haunch, saving the poor calf at any rate for a time. If it failed to find its mother the reprieve must have been short enough.

'Last night the wolves and the innumerable dogs at Tait's camp made noise enough to wake the dead. The dogs were disgusting with their horrible yelp and yowl, but I confess to a liking for the wild, melancholy, and almost musical notes of the wolf. Buffalo bulls, roaming about unscared by our tents, were bellowing around us all the while. [The sound is rather deep than loud] ; I have heard louder roaring from stags in many a Scottish deer-forest. The bulls were beginning their rutting season. Pairs might everywhere be seen outside the herds, consisting of a cow and an attendant bull who had taken her away from the rest ; but this I believe was rather exceptional, the sexes generally remaining together in large bands as usual.'

'I find buffalo meat tolerably good, but not nearly equal to fine beef. It is better in autumn they say, so I suspend my judgment.' Thus runs my journal, but I believe I was mistaken in that depreciatory opinion. In fact, we never kept the meat long enough, being obliged by the heat and the flies to use it the day it was killed, or soon after, which prevented it from having a fair chance to become tender.

One of the women brought in the bear-skin, very nicely prepared. It looked remarkably well, but I confidently ex-

pected to get much larger specimens of the grisly before my journey was completed.

These Indian women had been most serviceable to us in dressing skins and heads, drying meat, and mending or making clothes ; so, when adding a small present to the mere payment for their work, I was glad to find among my stores a parcel of beads exactly to their taste. It amused me to see that fashion reigned here as imperiously as in more civilised lands ; some fine, richly-coloured, oval beads, the size of pigeon's eggs, which I considered my best, and which a year or two before would have been generally admired, were despised and out of date, while the little trashy white ones, no bigger than a pin's head, were highly appreciated. Perhaps the small beads were valued as useful for embroidery, in which the Indian and half-breed women excel ; while the larger ones, only serving for necklaces and ornaments, had come to be thought too barbaric by those who lived at the Forts.

'In course of the afternoon the men employed themselves in feats of strength and skill. M'Kay seemed strongest in the arm. Kline showed himself both strong and active. Among other performances, he rolled a stick from under him, from breast to feet, while raising himself off his chest on his arms alone.'

I did not like the five-shot revolver carbine. It was very heavy, so short as to cause a difficulty in clearing the horse's head when shooting forward, and there was such an escape at the breech as to scorch one's wrists and burn one's shirt sleeves—for in the hottest weather we often left our coats at home. The first shot made Morgan shake his ears a while, the muzzle being so close to them, and when I afterwards fired from the shoulder several grains of powder struck pretty sharply upon my left cheek.

The twelve-bore guns are better best for buffalo-running, being quickly loaded ;—though too precious to be loaded in the quickest way, as the half-breeds manage the affair. These hunters go into action with their mouth full of bullets and a large horn of powder round their neck, and after each discharge pour a chance handful of powder down the barrel, spit a bullet in on the top, and strike the stock against their heel to send all home ; the lock being of the old flint-and-steel pattern, with a very large touch-hole, arranges itself if the chamber is closed. Of course the gun, thus loosely loaded, is held upright till the moment of firing, when the muzzle is so sharply tilted downwards that the ball has not time to drop out before the powder acts,—though now and then a burst does happen. The half-breeds never fire off the shoulder from horseback, but hold the gun out with both hands, in which manner some of them shoot accurately to a good long distance.

July 23d.—While we were at the Bad Hill, Indians came from a great camp of Crees, a day's march from Tait's, and reported that Blackfoot war-parties were spread all over the country, and had been trying to entrap them into ambuscades,—unsuccessfully, however, 'as they had been too often caught to be easily caught again.' This news determined me to go to Fort Carlton instead of Fort Pitt, for thus I might hope not only to escape the Blackfeet, who would steal my horses, but also to avoid the Crees, who would certainly be troublesome, even if they did not plunder to the same extent ; besides which we should gain the advantage of travelling with Tait's people, who were now preparing for their return. As I had hunted enough for the present, there was no longer any object in continuing the direct march to Fort Pitt, except the possible saving of a few days on the journey to Edmonton.

That course, however, involved several risks of loss and delay, and it was clearly worth while to sacrifice a little time by way of insurance.

I was well pleased with our sport among the buffalo, which to my mind could scarcely have been improved. Had slaughter been the chief object, we might have slain hundreds of bulls and lean cows—nothing could have been more easily done; but such cruelty would have weighed heavy on my conscience, and, to give my men justice, they showed no inclination for mere wanton massacre. Not counting two or three bulls shot after a fine run and allowed every chance for their lives, or slain under some sudden excitement, I could safely say that no buffalo had been killed by myself or my men except for good, or at all events definite and sufficient, reasons.

My own success I considered very satisfactory. I had picked out from an immense herd a bull with a head that everybody admired; and, besides shooting several good cows, I had killed one—the fine barren cow that Morgan had out-raced so gallantly—which was acknowledged to surpass any animal shot by the hunters at either encampment. It was time to leave off. We had all had enough of it, and the lean and fagged condition of our horses told the same tale; for buffalo-running under a July sun comes hard upon grass-fed animals already wearied by a long and toilsome journey.

That morning, accordingly, tents were struck in both the camps, and we all set out after breakfast, journeying nearly due north as we made our way together in the direction of Fort Carlton. From the time we passed the Roasting Hills the country became uninteresting,—chiefly consisting of damp prairies, covered with long grass and varied with swamps and bush, or poplar islands scattered here and there

on the verdant sea of plain. We soon came to a regular beaten cart-track ; no game was anywhere to be seen, for the buffalo were all on the other side of the hills, so, for most of the time, I made myself comfortable in the waggon, travelling smoothly enough upon that level road, by no means sorry to rest myself after the last week's toil, and glad to spare my riding horses as much as possible.

The absurd Bichon, delighted to find himself again in richer pasture, beguiled the time by feasting on flowers in his old peculiar way. Poor little Morgan ! I looked at him with a sorrowful heart. It grieved me that we were so soon to be parted. But he was far too thin and worn to go on to the mountains ; there was no choice but to leave him at Carlton to recruit for the homeward journey.

On the 24th we camped at a wooded creek, a few miles beyond the Elbow of the North Saskatchewan. The river at this place has hardly half the breadth of water that the South Branch possesses where it makes its great Elbow ; the banks of the former are more wooded than those of the southern stream, but neither so wild nor so roughly and picturesquely broken into heights. In the neighbourhood of our camp rose a fine spring, but it was too strongly flavoured with iron ore to be useful for ordinary purposes.

The next day we made an early start, travelling for some miles before breakfast, and by the afternoon we had arrived at Carlton, and encamped ourselves near the river a few hundred yards from the Fort.

Mr. Hardisty, the officer in charge, at once came to welcome us, offering every assistance in the most kind and obliging manner. He stayed a while at my tent, and we had tea together, after which he returned to the Fort,—where, by his hospitable invitation, I might have had a room, but as

our stay was to be but a short one, I preferred remaining under my own canvas. As things turned out, it was a bad arrangement ; for, presently, a set of drunken Indians pushed into the camp, prying everywhere, and making themselves quite at home, and between this intrusion and the savage attacks of the mosquitoes it was long before we could settle ourselves comfortably for the night.

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CHAPTER X.

FORT CARLTON TO FORT EDMONTON.

JULY 26th.—This morning Mr. Hardisty and I, accompanied by M'Kay and Tait, rode over to the "horse-guard," about three miles away on the farther side of the river, our object being to leave Morgan, Vermont, Paul, and Anthony, who were to be kept there till my return, and to choose other horses from the Company's lot, to be hired by us to supply their place.

All my horses, excepting the Bichon, whose worn-down hoofs required a set of shoes, having first been swum over to the better pasturage on the other side, we crossed in the skiff, and then proceeded on our way through a fine grazing country of undulating character, diversified with many small lakes and poplar groves, and covered with grass of the richest description abounding in different kinds of vetches. Looking back towards the Fort, the opposite banks of the river seemed like an English park, rising after the first steep ascent in gradual slopes luxuriantly clothed with wood, disposed by nature in groups and gladed masses, as if some skilful hand had been cutting the forest into forms of symmetry.

When we reached the horse-guard we beheld a drove of about twenty pony mares, all more or less prettily shaped, and some of them very handsome, who were roaming in the

fertile pastures with a good-looking brown stallion, over fourteen hands high, as their companion. There were also about fifty horses for carting and general purposes, and from among these we selected two stout bays to draw the waggon to Edmonton. We also picked out a small light-coloured "bichon," which I afterwards rode back to the Fort—a fat, comfortable, lazy little beast, branded on one hind quarter with the capital letter O.

Tait mounted himself on a fine young bay horse belonging to Mr. Hardisty, but being scarcely broke, it was so violent that he passed it on, after a struggle, to my Indian friend Napesskes, who had just joined us, and under his handling it went quietly enough for the rest of the way.

On coming to the river again we descried my poor old Bichon running up and down the opposite banks in anxious search for his comrades; no sooner did he make us out than he plunged into the water and swam so quickly to meet us that he reached the skiff before we were half-way across.

I then went to the Fort to make a settlement with Nummé, "the old gentleman," as my men always called him. I gave him the wonderful gun with some ammunition, also some tea and sugar, besides his wages, for he continued to say that he had been misled as to his engagement, and, much as I doubted this, I wished to leave no room to any one for complaint of my dealings. "The old gentleman," as we heard next morning, immediately went and bought a horse from a Cree,—who sold it him a tremendous bargain, having stolen it from a man of his own tribe, whom he knew to be in hot pursuit; Mr. Nummé then made a midnight flitting with his purchase. He certainly had the keenest eye for Number-One.

This business settled, I amused myself by looking through the store, that comprehensive place where everything required for the Indians or the Company's employes is procurable in greater or less abundance,—clothing, ammunition, blankets, groceries, pots and pans, crockery, knives, tobacco, and hundreds of miscellaneous unexpected things, all stowed away in an inviting orderly disorder, in regions redolent of the wild beasts' skins and furs collected in the course of trade. I bought some beads and a few useful common articles, and then Mr. Hardisty helped me in arrangements for the storage of my skulls and skins and other heavy goods which he had kindly offered to take care of till my return. He showed me a grisly bear-skin of immense size, larger than I could have thought possible; it belonged to Captain Palliser, who had bought it from an Indian during the previous winter.

'I also left every drop of rum that I had, that I might be able, with a clear conscience, to tell the Indians that there was none in the camp. I find I can do without stimulants, and do not like to be drinking wine or spirits when my men have nothing stronger than tea. Wine they would consider altogether out of their line, but spirits they might be more or less tempted by. I have no wine, however, nor do I want any.'

After this I went to pay a visit to Mrs. Tait, who lived with her husband at the Fort, the mother of the pretty little girl who came to my tent at Cherry Bush, as might easily be guessed by their likeness to one another. Mrs. Tait had been doing some sewing for me, and was now engaged in making me a few pairs of moccasins to take home on my return. Thanks to Mr. Hardisty's kindness, I was well supplied with moccasins for use; for on hearing

that I had none that fitted, he insisted on giving me three beautifully finished sets, besides which he presented me with a leather hunting-shirt for wear in the Rocky Mountains, where the dead and rugged branches in the thick fir woods make terrible havoc of all woollen clothes.

Fort Carlton was a large palisaded enclosure, with square bastions at each of the four corners; most of the houses tolerably good, but some not quite finished. It stood about a quarter of a mile from the river, at the foot of a bank, which had been cleared of wood immediately behind the buildings. The clearance was made entirely by Indian women under Mr. Hardisty's direction, for the men counted it disgraceful to do anything in the shape of labour. I noticed a party of these women washing clothes near the river in the morning, the wives and daughters of the drunkards who were so intrusive just after our arrival. One girl might almost be called pretty, but all, without exception, were flat-backed and masculine in contour.

The dogs were very numerous. Their chief use is in winter, those at the forts being generally idle at other seasons; we put one of them to work, however, making him draw things backwards and forwards in a small cart which Tait's children were in the habit of playing with. One of the little ones cried to see her cart going away, so we put her into it and made her happy again.

This afternoon we passed all our baggage across the river and camped on the other side, in readiness for an early start on the following morning.

July 27th.—I was dreaming about certain well-known scenes, which seemed the same and yet not the same, for they were changed by dream magic and exaggerated into glory, each stone transfigured into a rock, each hill into a

wild and beautiful mountain. The scene was beginning to open more clearly, when, at the most interesting moment, that wretched animal Pointer, devoured by mosquitoes, made a noisy entrance into my tent bringing with him legions of the enemy, and I awoke. Alas for him! his stay was neither long nor pleasant. Formerly I had sometimes pitied his sufferings and allowed him shelter under my roof, but his restlessness had always forced me to banish him; besides, there was something mean about his nature which had turned my liking into dislike, and I could not bear him near me.

I had by this time pretty well learned how to keep out the flies, and they never troubled me at night. Before lying down I used to shake the tent and fasten the door-flaps very carefully, then searching with a candle it was easy to discover and massacre any insects that remained.

Something is generally wanted at the last moment when leaving a Fort;—more pemmican had now to be sent for, such reports being abroad about the scarcity of food at Pitt and Edmonton, that we dared not trust to getting any supplies at either. This delayed us a little, but did not prevent a tolerably early start, thanks to being camped on the right side of the river.

After climbing the steep high bank, we passed through the same country as on the previous day, and then came to more level plains, though of equally fertile nature. Similar as they are in some respects, these rich pastures look quite unlike anything in England. The difference chiefly arises from the prevalence of poplars, which stamp a peculiar character on the landscape, for even when young and no larger than weeds, they grow so thickly through the herbage as to give it a strange unhomelike tinge.

'I hate the very sight of these poplar prairies, because they swarm with mosquitoes, which always abound in long grass. My joy is in a vast sandy plain, broken with bluffs, and carpeted with short, crisp, yellow-brown turf. There game abounds, and the abominable fly scarcely dares to show his proboscis. Well may the Evil One be called Baal-zebub—the god of flies!'

'Black, deprived of his friends Morgan and Vermont, has begun to scrape acquaintance with old Bichon, whom he never used to deign to notice.'

'At dinner time, looking at my meerschaum with a magnifying glass, I found, as I suspected, that there was a small crack where the bowl joins the stem, so that the oil bubbles through and makes a black patch, while the rest of the pipe takes on hardly any colour. This is a nuisance, but there is some amusement in watching how tobacco affects a pipe, just as doctors studied the process of digestion through a hole that remained open in a wounded man's stomach.' . . .

'Towards afternoon we came to a decidedly hilly country, with numerous small pools and lakes, and a good deal of poplar wood. Since crossing the North Branch, the whole country may be described as trying to break out into a wood, and half succeeding. In the evening we travelled along the shores of Bear Lake, a very pretty piece of water of some size, with stony promontories, deep bays, and wooded islands; then, continuing for a few miles farther, we reached a small artificial-looking lake, near which we camped.

'A funny black sleigh dog, as fat as a pig, and possessed of only four inches of tail, has come with us, following the old man who guides us till we meet La Grace* (a hunter

* *La Grace*, so the name is spelt in the Company's statement of accounts. It was, however, pronounced *Le Graisse*.

then on his way from Edmonton, who soon after joined my party). "Whisky" was rather timid at first, but I threw him some bits of meat, and we became very friendly, to the great disgust of Pointer, who is given to jealousy.'

The foxes kept constantly barking round our tent, uttering strange sounds, a mixture of the noises of the dog and the wolf. It was not a melodious note; but never have I known the cry of any wild animal that had not something pleasing in its cadences, when heard in a solitary desert place, where the din of man's life is far away, where nothing reveals itself to the eye or ear but is touched with the adorable melancholy of loneliness.

July 28th.—Our march took us over very hilly ground to-day. Right upon the track we discovered the remains of a broken waggon, belonging probably to some of the Canadians or Americans who had lately passed on their way to the gold diggings. I was just thinking how fortunate we had been in escaping such disasters, when a loud crash burst upon my ears, and I beheld M'Beath bounding from his cart, just clearing it as it upset and rolled over and over in its progress to the bottom of a hill. The axle had broken, nothing else was wrong, and nothing got damaged. A little wooded lake happened to be close at hand, so we took the opportunity for our mid-day halt; and while my men repaired the axle, I waited on a sunshiny slope covered with a profusion of wild strawberries, and finished my first reading of "The Winter's Tale." *

July 29th.—We had great trouble in catching Lane, who had now wonderfully freshened up and become a very handsome old horse. He belonged to a breed that ranges wild on the other side of the Rocky Mountains. Though

* See Appendix.

they had taken him when quite young, no one could ride him till he had once been tired nearly to death by drawing a sledge loaded with two buffalo cows as far as the Little Devil's Lake and back, with the heavy labour all the while of going first to make the track through the snow. He gave in as he reached his starting-point at Carlton, upon which they immediately got on his back and rode him when he was too weak for resistance. Though pretty well tamed by this discipline, he was subject to fits of wildness, and would never bear that anything should touch his flanks.

[Kline was the only person who could catch him in his difficult moods. It was a study to watch this man's tactics—how he walked round and round the wary old animal, bent half double and making the most extraordinary movements, till at length Lane grew so puzzled that he forgot to run away, while the active Frenchman slipped nearer and nearer, then suddenly threw a line over the horse's head, and secured him in an instant.]

Our road to-day ran pleasantly over crisp brown turf, and took us through an interesting country, hilly and picturesque, though rather bare of wood. As we passed by a place called "The Springs," Kline's cart stuck fast in a creek, and some of the things got a little wet, but the damage was not worth speaking of. We were preparing to halt for our night encampment, when M'Kay shot a skunk which the dogs had chased out of some bushes near the cart-track, whereupon there arose such an awful smell that we had to go on a good piece farther than we had intended.*

* In reference to the odour emitted by the skunk, I find the following amusing passage in Hearne:—"I cannot help observing that the fetid smell of the latter [the skunk] has not been much exaggerated by any author. When I was at Cumberland House in the fall of 1774, some Indians that were tenting on the plantation killed two of these animals, and made a feast of them; when

July 31st.—While we were dining on the shore of a large and beautiful piece of water called Jack-fish Lake, one of the Thick-wood Crees came paddling over in a canoe from the opposite side: my men and he held a long talk together, and I meanwhile read "Hamlet."*

Proceeding on our way, the country still bore a picturesque appearance, all wood, hill, and lake, but much of it had been terribly devastated by fire. The lakes were swarming with ducks and geese, the former easily to be picked up in any quantity. A large white wolf showed himself within fair range; I knocked him over with a shot through the haunches, but in spite of a shattered leg, he escaped me in the thickly wooded glen of a neighbouring creek, which same deep though insignificant rivulet presently cost us the trouble of raising all the baggage in the carts before we could attempt a crossing.

Soon afterwards, arriving at the White Mud Lake, we made an early halt there, intending to remain during the approaching Sunday, and formed our camp on the top of an elevated clay bluff, whose precipitous broken face encountered the wash of the water some twenty yards beneath our feet. The lake is triangular, and apparently about six miles in circumference; its water is of good quality for use.

the spot where they were singed and gutted was so impregnated with that nauseous smell which they emit, that after a whole winter had elapsed, and the snow had thawed away in the spring, the smell was still intolerable. I am told, however, that the flesh is by no means tainted with the smell, if care be taken in gutting, and taking out the bag that contains this surprising effluvia. . . . I do not think it is their urine which contains that pestilential effluvia, for if that was the case all the country where they frequent would be so tainted with it, that neither man nor beast could live there with any degree of comfort."—HEARNE, *A Journey to the Northern Ocean*, p. 377-8.

* See Appendix.

Sunday, July 31st.—La Grace arrived, bringing horses for Fort Carlton, which the old man, who had now to leave us, took under his charge, while the former remained as our guide. 'The queer fat dog Whisky has chosen to stop with us. He has rather attached himself to me; being very quiet he gives no trouble, and his ways amuse me.'

August 1st.—We started about 6 o'clock, and breakfasted at Turtle Creek. Our track led us through a prairie country, hilly in parts, and almost entirely blackened by recent fires. This made pleasant travelling, for there were no flies, there being no vegetation to harbour them, and the soil was so soft that the horses did not slip as they had been doing of late on the harder ground, through the almost glassy polish given to their unshod feet by contact with the short dry turf.

I had an accident to-day, owing doubtless to this very cause. The men were halting for dinner at English Creek, and as I cantered down a gentle grassy slope to join them, Wawpooss slipped and fell, throwing me on the point of my right shoulder. It hurt a little at the moment, and I felt it now and then afterwards, but years passed before I discovered that my collar-bone had been slightly dislocated.

In course of the morning we came to a place called Horse Hill, so named on account of a battle between the Crees and Blackfeet, in which forty horses were slain. A little farther on, the track brought us to within a mile of the Saskatchewan, and continued nearly in that line. 'Rode through an uninteresting country as far as Red Deer Hill. I believe we have made about forty miles to-day.'

August 2d.—'Reached Fort Pitt at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. The Fort stands within a hundred paces of the river, which is here deep and rapid, free from sandbanks,

and about three hundred yards wide. These last two days I have noticed a few spruce firs amidst the eternal poplar, but none of any size. In the whole British territory I have not yet seen one tree that would be called large in Scotland, not to speak of England. A tree thirty feet high and four feet round seems a giant here, and is rarely to be met with. I can only attribute this dearth of good timber to the fires that are constantly devastating the land. In one glen near the Qu'appelle (where we found a raven's nest on the 6th of July) there were oaks of a larger size, but they were of no height, for the winds that sweep the prairie had cut them down to the level of the shelter afforded by the protecting banks.

'The Fort, enclosed by high palisades with bastioned corners, forms a square rather more than half the size of Carlton. Viewed from above it is like a camp of immense tents, owing to the shape and colour of the roofs. Mr. Macaulay and Mr. Sinclair received me with the greatest kindness and cordiality. I supped with them at the Fort, and we afterwards smoked together at my camp.

'There are a number of Indians here, six tents of Wood Crees, and also some half-breed "free" hunters [hunters, that is, who are not in the Company's employ]; and as all of them keep a number of dogs, besides the large lot belonging to the Fort, it may be imagined what a nuisance it is. The whole evening and the whole night my men were pelting the beasts with sticks and stones; it was all we could do to save our meat and harness from their famished maws, though some of them must have been nearly killed by our missiles.'

August 3d.—'Mr. Macaulay and Mr. Sinclair breakfasted with me, and we afterwards rode to the horse-guard, about eight miles off. M'Kay came with us on Black,—whom I

wished to exchange if possible. Near the place we met two boys some fourteen years of age, both of them riding. One was on a quiet old pony, but the other rode a beautiful bay yearling, full of spirit, and so large and well made that it might easily have been thought two years older. This colt belonged to Mr. Rowland, an Orkney man of forty years' service with the Company, and celebrated for breeding fine horses; its rider was his son, who was considered about the best light-weight rider in the district.

'The horse-guard was kept by an old French half-breed named Charlevoix, in whose tent we waited the arrival of Mr. Rowland, to whom a message had been sent requesting him to meet us. A nice little girl came and seated herself on her father's feet as he squatted cross-legged on the ground in the Indian fashion; she was evidently his particular pet. Outside there was a large drove of mares and horses, perhaps a hundred and fifty; among them I observed a fine stallion. They were grazing in very rich plains, well watered but not wet, the best possible country for horses. All around was hilly, wood growing more or less abundantly over both hill and dale.

'Mr. Rowland, a pleasant-looking old man, was not long in coming. He saw Black gallop, and then rode him himself. Both he and Mr. Sinclair wanted to get the horse, on account of his appearance and great speed, and various exchanges were proposed on all sides. Finally I parted with him to Mr. Sinclair for a well-known buffalo-runner, ten years old, a red roan with black points, called "Cendré," on account of his colour, and a very neat bichon pony, six years old, said to be a good runner also, which was bought on the spot at a large price from Charlevoix the horse-keeper.

'Considering further that I must soon leave my old Bichon, as he had got very thin, I thought it would be better

both for myself and the poor beast to part with him now, so I negotiated an exchange with Mr. Rowland, who gave me a fine strong three-year-old "cendré" in his stead, receiving also a few pounds besides. Bichon is at a discount here. They say he is older than I was led to believe, and that though once a very good runner, he has much fallen off. I daresay this is true, for he did not seem to me at all fast, although very lasting.'

Mr. Rowland at first wanted more on the exchange than I was inclined to offer, and we ended by dividing the difference. Hearing afterwards on good authority that he had got rather the worst of the bargain, I made out the order for the sum he originally mentioned, being unwilling to gain a profit at his expense. I rode the young horse home, and liked him enough to assign that as a reason for valuing him at the larger sum. 'Mr. Rowland has a number of very good horses; unfortunately he has a fancy for docking their tails,—spoiling their beauty, and giving the flies a cruel advantage. In this country they always work their horses at two years old, which seems a mistake.'

We got the carts and everything across the river, and made a start in the afternoon. There was a steep bank to ascend, much higher than that on the northern side; having climbed it, however, we found a good hard road on the top, along which we drove for four or five miles and then camped.

I was riding Cendré (the Sinclair cendré,—the other one I called "Rowland"), a handsome well-bred horse with a beautiful head peculiarly fine in the muzzle, and with large, intelligent, gentle eyes. Mr. Sinclair took an affectionate leave of his favourite. "Poor Cendré," he said, "I shall never see you again." I promised to bring the good horse back if care would do it, but I spent my words in vain,

for Mr. Sinclair firmly believed that the Rocky Mountains would finish Cendré, even if some of the others escaped, as he was older and more delicately bred than the rest of the band.

Not far from the Fort we met a Cree riding alone, bearing with him a curious red-deer fawn-skin quiver filled with arrows. I asked Mr. Macaulay to buy it for me if possible, thinking the Indian would be willing to part with it, being so near his own tents; but I afterwards heard that he did not succeed in getting it.

August 5th.—This morning we worked at turning large horse-shoes into small ones for some of the ponies whose hoofs were much worn. M'Kay made an excellent job by heating the shoes in our camp fire, and bending and shortening them on the edge of an old axe.

At dinner two men came express with letters from Fort Pitt, of little consequence as it happened. These messengers had travelled fifty or sixty miles since sunrise.

We got quantities of ducks in a small lake, which was perfectly alive with them. I shot some, and Short shot some, and Pointer caught numbers of young ones as they swam about the edges and tried to hide in the overhanging bushes, amidst which he ferreted them out most perseveringly.

Later in the day, as M'Kay and I rode together behind the carts, we observed a large white female wolf stealing after us some little distance in the rear. Wishing to shoot her, M'Kay dismounted as soon as we got out of sight, and hid himself in a bush close by the road, waiting till she came up; meanwhile I went quietly on so as not to excite her suspicions.

Presently the wolf appeared again, still following right on our track. M'Kay let her almost touch the bush that concealed him, then gave her the whole of his first barrel;

she staggered, but instantly recovering herself, leapt at his throat, with a tremendous spring; he was ready, however, and his second barrel hurled her backwards and rolled her into a lifeless heap. The gun was only loaded with small shot, intended for ducks, so that very close quarters were necessary in killing such an animal as a wolf, and this one was of the largest kind.

August 6th.—The country, which had been hilly since we left Fort Pitt, now became more and more wooded, with swamps in the hollows that lay between the hills. The mosquitoes were absolutely swarming; their bites, however, had ceased to swell up and fever me as formerly, so it was easier to bear with their horrible annoyance. The horses seemed to suffer more than we did. Little Bichon was quite lame in the near hind-foot from stepping into the smoke fire one night; Cendré also had slightly burnt one of his hind-feet in the same manner. The poor things used to crowd round the fire to avoid the tormenting flies, and in struggling to keep their position in the smoke, they pushed one another into the midst of the red-hot embers. We made a smoke fire for them every night by heaping turf over burning logs, leaving openings in the mound for the escape of the smoke, which would then continue to issue in dense clouds for hours together.

During the morning we passed by the Black Mud Hill, so named from a place near a swamp where the Indians have dug holes to get a certain substance found there [using it, I believe, for painting purposes]. It was of the colour and look of tar, but with no perceptible smell.

Soon afterwards the sky began to threaten, and my tent was scarcely pitched, when the rain poured forth in torrents, drifting hard before a strong north-westerly gale.

While dinner went on a small dark-coloured bird came and perched itself on my table. It was so tame that it would not leave us, but kept hopping about among the men, and I had difficulty in saving its life from the thoughtless cruelty of one of them, whose Indian blood, I suppose, got the better of him. I was just in time to save our little visitor from having his neck wrung; strange to say, the man, a good-natured fellow at heart, seemed surprised I should care about such a trifle, though ready to oblige me by setting his prisoner free.

August 8th.—‘The rain lasted all Saturday night, the storm driving the water through my tent canvas in a constant fine drizzle of spray; by noon on Sunday it had partly cleared, but continued cloudy and showery. This morning it was very wet again; after dinner, however, we determined to start, as it seemed a little clearer, but it rained so heavily when we set out that M’Kay and La Grace wanted to halt in about an hour’s time. This I objected to, so we went on and made a march of about sixteen miles, camping at last on a pleasant dry prairie instead of lingering among the long, wet, mosquito-stuffed grass in which we had spent our Sabbath—as my Scotsmen called it in true Presbyterian fashion.

‘There was rain more or less all the afternoon, but we were crossing an open plain, which looks less dismal than the woods under such circumstances.’

We observed the track of a bear in a sandy place near some patches of bush, but the animal himself was not forthcoming.

August 9th.—‘A mild misty morning, which changed into a cloudy showery day. Met an American, Mr. Hind, with a Saskatchewan man driving pack-horses, on his road from Edmonton to Carlton. He tells me that the neighbour-

hood of Jasper's House, a Fort in the mountains, is a good country for game.

'While we were halting after dinner, the horses happened to move towards the camp, and foolish young Rowland must needs come jumping along with his fore-feet close together as if in hobbles, which, from late experience, he fancied he had on him, though in fact perfectly free. The men were as much amused as I was, declaring they had never seen such a thing before.

'Sometimes a horse will give two or three leaps just after the hobbles are taken off, as if still feeling constrained, but that is not surprising. No one had been near Rowland since he was unsaddled, so there was nothing to remind him of his fetters. He is raw and awkward and lazily inclined, but I rather like him to ride. The Carlton Bichon is very smart.

'Halted in an open near a swampy lake. Mosquitoes very bad, worse I think this afternoon than I ever knew them while actually on the march. At dinner time I lighted a small fire in my tent, and found it answer well in keeping them out.'

August 10th.—'Had the little prairie-fowls for breakfast, the size of blackbirds and perfectly delicious.

'Our track still through a flat country all wood and swamp; one can seldom see more than a hundred yards on either side, seldom as much, indeed. Fine hot weather again.

'Camped for the night on a knoll a few hours from Edmonton, from which there was a beautiful view over a circle of wooded plain, perfectly level except where the steep north bank of the river was discernible. My tent was just pitched when a heavy thunderstorm began, and lasted about an hour. After this it cleared, and there was a lovely effect caused by

the setting sun ; on one side all was orange and gold, beneath a black cloud which melted into misty gray as it met the bright tints of the sunlight, and on the opposite side moved the dark departing thunder-cloud with a perfect rainbow enamelled on its face.

‘Sat up late reading “Much Ado about Nothing.” . . .
The wolves howled, the night was very cold.’

CHAPTER XI.

FORT EDMONTON.

AUGUST 11th.—It was yet early in the day when we found ourselves looking down on the broad stream of the Saskatchewan river, from the summit of a high steep bank directly opposite to Fort Edmonton. My men advanced and saluted the Fort with a general volley from their guns and rifles,—a summons promptly answered by the despatch of a boat, which in a short while ferried us across to the northern shore. As we landed, Mr. Brazeau, the officer temporarily in charge, and the Rev. Mr. Woolsey, the Wesleyan missionary of the district, politely came forward to meet us and offer their friendly welcomes on our arrival.

The Fort, externally an oblong palisaded inclosure with flanking towers at the corners, at once struck me as being considerably larger than Fort Carlton, the buildings comprised within its limits being likewise more important both in size and character. Immediately in front of the principal gateway, the ground fell suddenly in a deep and almost precipitous descent to the river, which at this part seemed to carry a great body of water, with an apparent width of about 250 yards. Upstream the view was exceedingly pretty, for the elevated banks which confined the channel were picturesquely broken, and richly covered with an abundant growth of wood.

From each side of the enclosure there dropped a sudden slope to level plateaus near the river-side, the eastmost of

which was under cultivation as an arable farm. They were cutting wheat at the time. It seemed a poorish crop; but I did not very closely examine it, and perhaps there was better grain elsewhere. A windmill placed upon the higher ground at the back of the Fort betokened a certain amount of agricultural business in the district.

August 12th.—This morning was occupied in consultation with McKay in regard to the things that were to be sent back to Carlton. Much had to be left behind, for our cart had now to be given up as utterly unsuitable for the rugged mountain-paths we were so soon to follow; and travelling with pack-horses, which was now to be our plan, obliges a very strict limitation of the weight and quantity of one's baggage.

My journey, as roughly mapped out, was to be thus arranged: In the first instance, I meant to proceed straight to Jasper's House Fort, and thence southwards along the mountains by the Iroquois track as far as the Kootanie Plain, or farther if time permitted; after that, I intended to cross the plains to Fort Carlton, so as to arrive there no later than the 1st of October.

Anxious as I was to set out before the best of the season slipped by, I found myself obliged to submit to a few days' delay: for pack-saddles had to be made; horses to be bought, hired, or exchanged; provisions laid in; a hunter acquainted with the mountains engaged; and a guide procured who was known to the Blackfeet and able to interpret their language, for we were going into the country inhabited by that tribe and fully expected to meet them.

At this time Mr. Woolsey was a temporary inmate of the Fort. We were very frequently together, and had much conversation on different subjects, amongst which I was

particularly interested in those relating to his own missionary labours, and to the Indians under his spiritual care.

It was from him that I first heard some details about the characters that had been invented by one of the Protestant missionaries for the Crees, which, though of rather recent introduction, had already got largely into use among them for writing as well as reading purposes.

Owing to the nature of the language, which, it seems, chiefly consists of a few simple syllables repeated in varying combinations, syllabic signs had been found more suitable than a strictly alphabetical plan; the new characters had therefore been arranged in groups of monosyllables,—every group containing the same set of vowels, but each having its own prefix which regulated the general form of the group-character, while that in turn was systematically varied according to its accompanying vowel. For example, (A, E, O, AH, being the standard set of vowels), **┐**, **┐**, **┐**, **┐**, represent Ma, Me, Mo, Mah: **q**, **p**, **d**, **b**, represent Ka, Ke, Ko, Kah, —and so on. There are also a few terminals, such as **n** for S, **l** for P,—all the signs being of the simplest and plainest nature. To represent a word, the appropriate characters for its different syllables are placed together in their order, each succeeded by a terminal if necessary;—thus **P**=se, **A**=pe, in combination **PA**=se-pe (river, as perhaps in *Mississippi*); or **┐**=mo, **n**=s, **┐**=to, **n**=s; in combination, **┐n┐n**, Mostos (Buffalo).

Besides showing me several books printed on this system, Mr. Woolsey was good enough to write out for my use a tabular list of characters and terminations; he also gave me a neat little Cree hymn-book as a specimen of the new typography.*

* See Appendix.

‘He informs me that he has baptized several hundred Indians, in every case believing he had sufficient grounds for doing so.

‘Speaking of the large contributions that are sent to the Wesleyan Missionary Fund, he told me a curious story about a subscription it had lately received, which, in round numbers, came to the extraordinary amount of £18,000. The anecdote is as follows:—

‘Mr. —, a poor man but ingenious, wished to take out a patent for a certain invention, but the means were wanting. He prayed much and earnestly on the subject, and at length one day a Quaker came to him and said, “Friend, I have an impression thou art in need of money.” Mr. — replied that it was so, and explained the case; upon which the Quaker said, “Thou canst have as much as thou wantest.” The invention succeeded, and Mr. — gave £100 to the Wesleyan Mission as a percentage on the profits. Next year, giving in the same proportion, he increased his subscription to £1 a day. Soon afterwards he bought an estate in Ireland, in which was a copper-mine supposed to be exhausted; he found a fresh vein of ore, and money poured in. He then laid by for the mission £7 a day; and at length his gains became so great that, with thanks to God for increasing his fortune sevenfold, he began to devote £49 a day, which by the end of the year had accumulated into the magnificent donation referred to above.’

‘On the subject of the Cree language, Mr. Woolsey told me that when speaking of certain things, such as horses, dogs, etc., one must not put the pronoun “my” before the noun, but use an altogether different word; for otherwise, according to the idiom, you would be claiming identity with

the object you merely meant to claim as your own. There was a certain missionary who wished to call some Indians to drive away one of his pigs, which was doing mischief. Being ignorant of the idiom, instead of expressing himself as he intended, he ran shouting about the place—"I am a pig, I am a pig," to the great delight of the natives.*

'Mr. Woolsey has a high opinion of the Blackfeet. They are very fond of Englishmen, and call them Na-pi-quan, which means "white man," as a term of honour. The Yankees they dislike.

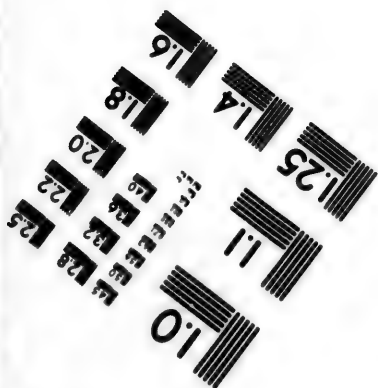
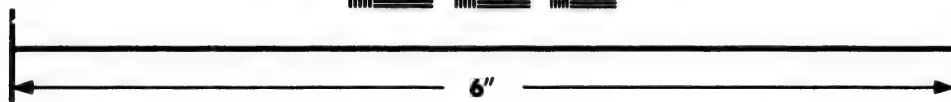
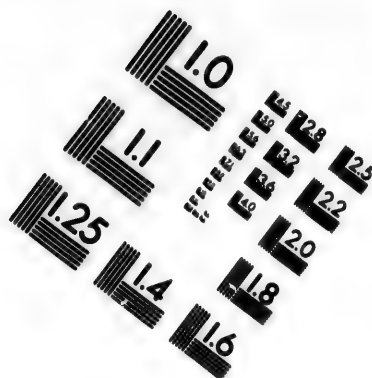
'One cold day a Blackfoot appeared with nothing on him but a single wretched blanket. To account for his miserable condition, he explained that one of his children having died, everybody, according to the custom of the tribe, had rushed into his tent and taken possession of all he had, not even sparing his clothes. The truth of this being ascertained, the Indian was presented with various things to help him in his need.'

'Mr. Brazeau, who is an American by birth, informs me that he lived for a great many years in the Missouri and Yellowstone country. He confirms all Catlin's statements about the Mandans, especially as to their customs of cruel self-torture; he also affirms the truth and accuracy of Catlin's Indian portraits, which some shallow people have attempted to discredit.

'Were an angel to write his travels, the fiend would inspire some weak creature to pour doubts and sneers and small jokes over the book. Every man who has not spent his life in a London garret has seen and done some things

* I have heard similar stories about missionaries in the South Sea Islands. To the best of my recollection Mr. Woolsey did not vouch for the truth of the anecdote, but only for its possibility.





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removed from commonplace experience, and therefore startling to many on first hearing of them; but I hold that when a man of good reputation states a thing as a fact, it is as great a treason to honour to doubt him, as it would be to accuse him wantonly of forgery or theft. Indeed these town critics are apt to expose nothing but their own ignorance in carping at books of foreign travel,—much as if a Blackfoot Indian were to argue with a cockney on questions of London life and manners. Hear them, for instance, on Gordon Cumming and his vast herds of antelopes—but *satis!*

August 13th.—A number of dogs made a disturbance about midnight by howling and fighting in the passages outside my room. One white wolfish brute began to peer in at the windows, which happened to look into a verandah, then several others came crowding up, and they seemed half inclined to break through. I prevented all risk of that trespass by whipping them down stairs and shutting the outer door, which some one had carelessly left open—an invitation not likely to be neglected by these greedy animals. No doubt they had supposed the house to be empty, none of the rooms but my own being occupied at night, the others, such as the large dining-room below, being only made use of in the day-time.

‘There are more dogs here than at any place I know. They are mostly of the ordinary Indian kind, large and long-legged and wolfish, with sharp muzzles, pricked ears, and thick, straight, wiry hair. White is one of the most usual colours, but brown, blue-grey, red, yellow, and white marked with spots of black or of the other various hues, are also common. Some of them are black with white paws, others are covered with long rough hair like Russian setters. There are others of a light bluish-grey, with dark,

almost black, spots spread over the whole body, a variety which is said to be frequent in the Blackfoot camps. Almost all of them have black noses, but with some of the lighter-coloured ones this part is red, brown, or pink, which has a very ugly effect.'

Most of them are very wolfish in appearance, many being half or partly, or all but entirely, wolves in blood. One dark grey dog, indeed, was said to be almost a pure wolf, and bore the appropriate name of Mihēkan, the term for that beast in Cree.* Seeing him on the plains it would be impossible to distinguish him from a common wolf of the middle-sized variety, and his temper was spoken of as a match for his looks. To do him justice, he behaved in a very friendly way when his handsome appearance led me to notice him, coming obediently at my call and allowing me to pat him on the head. Had I been aware of his character I should probably have let him alone. Dr. Hector, to whom this dog belonged, afterwards told me that before harnessing or unharnessing they were obliged to stun it with a blow on the nose, on account of its savage nature. Some of the others, however, were nearly as bad, and needed a taste of the same rough discipline.

Many of the male dogs of this wolfish sort had been emasculated, to tame their fierceness and spirit without spoiling them for work. Mihekan had been so treated, and poor good-natured Whisky was another example, though in his case it must certainly have been an act of supererogation.

In winter these dogs draw sleighs and do nearly all the work of the country; at other seasons they do nothing for man, but pass their time in war, love, robbery, and music.

* "Mahaygan—Cree Indians." RICHARDSON, *Faun. Bor. Am.*, vol. i. 66. My spelling represents the pronunciation of the word as I heard it.

Neglected as these noisy, dirty animals are in their months of idleness, unfed, kept in bare life by plunder, the mark for every passer's stick or stone, they are highly valued by their owners, and a team of fine, good, well-trained dogs will bring a handsome price, especially when the winter snows begin to come on.

'Read Lewis and Clarke's travels, finished Harmon's Journal, also read most of Father De Smet's missionary travels. The latter gives an interesting account of the conversion of many of the Kootanie and Flat-head Indians. From the exaggerated, forcible-feeble style of the writer I felt inclined to doubt if his success had equalled his belief in it; but Mr. Brazeau assured me that these Indians were now really good Christians, truthful, brave, and moral, and so honest that if they find even the smallest thing, such as a pocket knife or a piece of tobacco, they will bring it to the camp of the probable loser and cry it up and down till he is discovered.

'Mr. Brazeau considers that, to the west of the mountains, the Roman Catholics have wrought a great work of reformation among the natives—God speed them, say I with all my heart. In this district, however, he considers that Protestant and Roman Catholic teachers alike have little influence for good. The Indians listen to them, pretend to believe and obey, and obtain baptism, but as soon as the missionary takes his leave they relapse into their former practices. All with whom I have conversed agree in thinking that little or nothing can be done to improve the adults of the Cree, Ojibw, Assiniboine, or Blackfoot tribes, and believe that the only hope lies in teaching and influencing the young, before evil and reckless habits become a part of their nature.

'It seems to me (and to my informants also) that the clergy of every sect make a great mistake in obliging converted Indians who have several wives to put away all but one. A Blackfoot chief lately spoke good sense on this subject. "Tell the priest," he said to Mr. Brazeau, "that if he wishes to do anything with my people he must no longer order them to put away their wives. I have eight, all of whom I love, and who all have children by me—which am I to keep and which put away? Tell those who have only one wife not to take more, but do not talk about putting away wives already married."

'This chief, however, injured the moral force of his remarks by going on to say that his eight wives could dress a hundred and fifty skins in the year, whereas a single wife could only dress ten, supposing she were always well, and that such a loss of property was not to be thought of. He also told the priest not to object to rum-drinking, as the love of it formed part of the very nature of his people. These evils, he said, time might cure, but they must not be too vehemently opposed at present.

'However plainly self-interest betrays itself in this speech, however impossible it would be to lower Christianity by sanctioning drunkenness, some of the Indian's words appear to me not unworthy of attention. Let the injury done to the affections of husband and wives, and the cruelty of depriving so many women and children of their protectors, be weighed against the considerations that prevent polygamy among civilised people, and surely, in the absence of a direct divine command, the former will bear down the scale. There is no absolute commandment against polygamy, though its inexpediency might be inferred from Christ's reference to the original order of creation; but

while things inexpedient may become things unlawful to the enlightened man, the case of the unenlightened is widely different; and the mere telling of truths to a savage no more amounts to the making him an enlightened man, than shooting a turnip from a cannon through the body of an ox would amount to feeding him for a year, and letting him gain fatness by processes neither you nor he could entirely explain.

‘We must remember that polygamy was allowed to the Jews, and in certain cases even commanded; and it upsets all ideas of right and wrong to assert that the Almighty would in any case command what is evil in its very essence;—to love God would be impossible for an upright mind were such a procedure fully apprehended as conceivable. In his Epistle to Timothy, St. Paul decrees that a bishop must be the “husband of one wife,” thus plainly declaring that persons differently circumstanced were to be found within the Christian pale; if this be admitted, we obtain a guiding star to follow if we choose.

‘Dr. Livingstone, in dealing with the African savages, allowed them full liberty with regard to their supernumerary wives, merely recommending separation if practicable, and forbidding polygamy in future. The result was that his sincerer converts in course of time endeavoured to follow his advice, from anxiety to reach to the utmost heights of Christian excellence, instead of, like too many American Indians, humouring the missionary and obtaining baptism by feigned compliances offered from interested motives and evaded at the first opportunity.

‘I was amused in Father De Smet’s letters to read the following remarks on the fastings of the Indian warriors:—
“Before setting out for war they observe a strict fast. . . .

for four days. During this interval their imagination is excited to madness, and either from the effect of weakness or the warlike projects which fill their minds, they pretend that they have extraordinary visions." For "warlike projects" substitute "religious fervours," and strike out "pretend" as uncharitable, and the Reverend Father has philosophically accounted for various miracles believed in by the more ignorant of his own church! [So far good, but—to my former self I say it—There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.]

This afternoon a man brought for my inspection a fine-looking red-dun horse, which he wished to exchange for Cendré. It was branded on the shoulder with an open hand, and on the quarter with a figure very like a gallows though really meant to represent a man,—marks signifying that some former Indian owner had killed an enemy off this horse's back. Its age seemed about the same as Cendré's, but it was in better travelling condition. The man declared that he wanted my horse, because having bred it he felt an affection for the animal, and regretted that it should go to certain death on a journey so much beyond its powers. Believing this to be partly a *bonâ fide* reason, I consented to try the red horse on the following Monday, with some idea of agreeing to the bargain if I found him suit. Wawpooss being evidently unfit for farther travels, I gave him in exchange for a very pretty young cream-coloured pony. My men had plenty of work in shoeing the horses. Old Wawbee in particular showed great vice, and had to be cast and fastened before anything could be done with him.

Sunday, August 14th.—After breakfast we had service in the large dining-room, at which a number of the men

and one or two women were present. Mr. Woolsey read the liturgy without the litany, and afterwards preached a sermon.

'We had another service in the evening. A converted Indian officiated as clerk and led the singing, and but for some trifling mispronunciations one could hardly have known him from an Englishman acting in the same capacities. While we sat in solemn silence just before prayers began, a little boy ran down the passage outside, and suddenly struck up an Indian war-song—"Hi, hi,—ah, he,—ah"—or some such sounds, in the shrillest of tones, half yelp, half howl, with an inconceivably ridiculous effect. There was a momentary struggle, then one universal roar of laughter.

'In all Indian music that I have heard there is a remarkable likeness to the howling of wolves, mingled with the droning growl of a bear. The Blackfeet, however, are said not only to excel all other tribes in music, but to have really fine voices.'

August 15th.—After arranging an exchange of Nez-blanc and Gris for two sound useful animals, I rode with Mr. Brazeau to the haymakers' tents, taking the opportunity of trying the red-dun horse that had Blackfoot hieroglyphics on his skin. He carried me pleasantly and well, but I observed a suspicious lump on one of his forelegs near the fetlock, which decided me to keep my own good horse, though he was in such poor condition. It would have been a mistake to do otherwise, for, besides his inferiority to my Cendré, the dun, as I afterwards discovered, had a trick of turning lame after a few days of steady hard work.

Again I had cause to admire the fine riding of the boys. Little fellows ten or twelve years old would jump on the

back of any horse they could lay hands on, and gallop him about the place, with no saddle at all, and with no better bridle than a cord round his lower jaw. They were perfectly fearless, and sat their horses with a firmness, spirit, and grace very beautiful to see, guiding them at their will by movements scarcely discernible.

I now succeeded in engaging a guide for the mountains, an oldish French half-breed, named Antoine Blandoine, an experienced hunter, and well acquainted with most of the country we intended to visit. He was to have the same pay as some of my other men, viz. £5 a month,—his pay to continue till his return to Edmonton.

As I was smoking at the gate of the Fort, Lapatâque—the principal Cree chief, though for many years he had hunted for the Company—happened to be standing near me. Wishing to light my pipe, I brought out some ordinary fusees, which seemed to be so much of a novelty to Lapatâque that I gave him two or three from my box as specimens. I was afterwards surprised to hear that he had been highly pleased with this trivial present, going to one of his friends expressly to show him the matches, and tell that they had been given him by the "chief" himself. 'This shows how far very small kindnesses will go with an Indian of the right sort.'

'Mr. Brazeau was smoking in my room after supper, and gave me a great deal of interesting information. He again vouched for the truth of Catlin's book, and further mentioned to me that he had signed one of the letters, in the first volume of that work, which testify to its perfect accuracy.*

'He told me that at the American forts the British flag

* CATLIN, *North American Indians*, vol. i. pp. 11-13.

is treated with the greatest respect, and in proof mentioned that a young man at one of these forts having taken a Union Jack from the hands of an Indian who had come to trade, and kicked it about, the superintendent lectured him publicly, and made him pay the Indian a very heavy fine. On other occasions Indians have received presents at the American forts for the special reason that they were wearing British medals. At our own forts the American flags, which the Blackfeet often bring with them, are treated with corresponding respect, and are spoken of to the Indians as "good" flags.'

In answer to some remark of mine about Pe-toh-pee-kiss (The Eagle-ribs), a Blackfoot, whose portrait is in Catlin's work, Mr. Brazeau assured me that that Indian was a great warrior indeed, and a very noble fellow. No less than eleven white men, chiefly free trappers, had met their death at his hands. In most cases, however, they had brought this fate upon themselves, for Pe-toh-pee-kiss had slain them in self-defence against treacherous attacks made on him during his different attempts to arrange a truce.

On one occasion he had charge of letters for a Mr. Vanderbilt, but that gentleman being at the head of a large party it was not safe to approach him rashly, so Eagle-ribs and his people halted in concealment a little way off, to paint themselves and prepare for a formal advance. Meanwhile, however, Mr. Vanderbilt and three of his men went forward to reconnoitre, the discovery of a newly killed buffalo having raised the suspicions of the party, though their leader himself would not believe that any Indians were near.

These reconnoiters unluckily rode straight into the middle of the concealed Blackfeet, who quietly formed a

circle round them, then suddenly sprang up and attempted to seize them,—with no bad intention, but merely to secure hostages for their own safety when approaching the white men's camp. Mr. Vanderbirt, however, at once fired at the nearest Indian, killing him on the spot, and then rode for his life, but ere he had well started his horse was shot, and in falling pinned his leg to the ground.

He rose on one knee, drew a pistol, and drove the muzzle into the face of an Indian who was rushing upon him, pulling the trigger at the same time; but he had not observed that the cock was bolted, there was no discharge, and he only succeeded in gashing his opponent's cheek by the force of his blow. The other Indians immediately took their knives and cut Mr. Vanderbirt in pieces.

Pe-toh-pee-kiss soon afterwards came to Mr. Brazeau and explained the occurrence. He brought with him the unfortunate man's pistols—which were subsequently sent to his relations,—the rifle he could not bring, for it had been buried beside the warrior it had slain.

'A short while after this event, Pe-toh-pee-kiss went towards an American party and attempted to treat for peace. A few Americans rode to meet him, headed by a man named Bridger. This villain, desiring revenge on the Blackfoot, treacherously concealed his rifle between his leg and the saddle, and, when stooping down to shake hands with Eagle-ribs, he secretly pushed the weapon forward and fired. Happily the Indian saw the trick in time to save himself, though the bullet cut away the powder-horn that hung on his chest. Upon this the Blackfeet fired at Bridger slightly wounding him, and as he galloped off lodged several arrows in the lower part of his back. Seeing his condition, a man who was on baddish terms with him, Black Harris by

name, mockingly cried out—"Hulloa! Bridger, what's the matter now?" "Only some feathers in my —," answered Bridger, who was a coarse fellow. His conduct was much blamed by his companions.

'One of the party was a Spaniard, who was married to a Blackfoot woman. She had just then ridden over to the Indians to see her brothers, and to interpret between the two sides. As soon as the firing began the Indians seized her, but her horse escaped and came back to the Americans, with her little baby hanging to the saddle in its upright cradle of boards. If parted from its mother the child was sure to die; so the poor father declared he would risk his own life for its sake, and he rode boldly with it to the Blackfeet. They received him kindly, and gave the baby to its mother, but refused to let her go back. They invited her husband, instead, to join their tribe. He could not do so then, he told them, for he was under other engagements, but without fail he would come to them in a few months: they let him go, and he faithfully kept his word.'

'Pe-toh-pee-kiss (Petóch-pekíss, as Mr. Brazeau pronounces it) is a Blood Indian. There are three tribes of the great Blackfoot nation,—viz. the Blackfeet, the Blood Indians, and the Piégans, all of whom speak the same language and live in close alliance. [The Fall Indians, also, are of the same race.] It is easy, I am told, to distinguish them apart by differences of dialect and pronunciation, like those in the various districts of England or Scotland; besides, the Blood Indians dress more neatly and are finer and bolder looking men than the Blackfeet, who in turn surpass the Piégans in these respects.

'The Blood Indians have among them a number of comparatively fair men, with grey eyes, and hair both finer and

lighter coloured than usual in the case of pure Indians. Pe-toh-pe-kiss is a man of this complexion. This tribe is supposed to bear its savage name, not from any peculiar cruelty of disposition, but because, unlike the other tribes, its warriors do not steal horses, but only seek for the blood of their enemies, whom they generally overcome, for they are among the bravest of all the natives.

'The Blackfeet are a livelier race than the Crees. The latter are quarrelsome when in liquor, while the former show their jollity by dancing, singing, and laughing, and kissing and hugging one another with all sorts of absurd antics. Though so fond of rum the Blackfeet are not habitual drunkards. They get completely drunk once or twice a year, but at other times take nothing stronger than the coffee which the American Government sends them as part of an annual subsidy—for a great part of their territory lies south of the British frontier. They consider—and not without some reason—that their periodical excesses are good for them, curing the biliousness caused by their mode of living.

'In the British territory most of the white men who have got Indian wives are married to Crees, but some have allied themselves with the Blackfeet, and it is said that the women of that tribe never desert their husbands as the others sometimes do. On the American side there are comparatively few half-breeds, and few or none of them are past middle age; while across the border, in the Company's domains, there are grandfathers of mixed blood whose own grandfathers were half-breeds.

'Mr. Brazeau tells me that the only Indians whose women are chaste are the Sioux, who at least equal Europeans in this respect. The Mandans and Crows, on the other hand, are particularly bad in their morals. The Sioux, of all

Indians, are those who most keep to their old mode of dress ; the Blackfeet and the rest are all rapidly adopting blankets and capots, and giving up the beautifully painted robes of their forefathers. The few painted robes that are now made are inferior in workmanship to those of days gone by.'

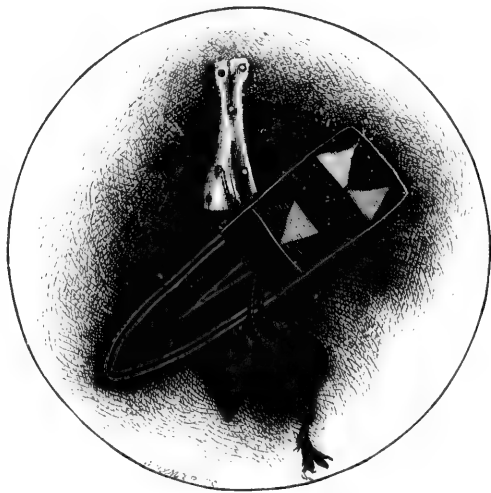
August 16th.—The rain had at last disappeared and bright sunshine come in its place ; the weather looked inviting for a journey. Mr. Woolsey left the Fort that morning, and set out on one of his missionary expeditions, and by the following day I earnestly hoped to get away also. Nothing was wanting for my departure but the arrival of Piskan Munroe, a Scotch half-breed, whom it was important to engage as interpreter, for he not only knew the Blackfoot language, but was on intimate terms with the tribe, being closely connected with it by blood. He was now daily expected.

I added another horse to my lot by exchanging the Colt's carbine for a useful sort of animal, receiving a trade-gun as make-weight besides : I did not think it a very good bargain, but horses were a necessity, and I was glad to obtain them on any fairly reasonable terms.

Whilst staying at the Fort I bought from a half-breed a knife of what is called the "dag" pattern, a heavy, flat, double-edged blade about eight inches long, of triangular shape, tapering to a point from a width of some two and a half inches at the base. The Edmonton hunters always carry very strong and large knives, for the purpose of cutting through branches when traversing the dense fir woods that cover a great part of the country ; some of them use extremely heavy ones, half knife half axe,—like a narrow sort of butcher's cleaver with a point instead of a squared-off end, or perhaps more resembling the peculiar oriental sword so often represented in old pictures and

engravings. Indeed, I have been told that these demi-bills were originally copied from a weapon borne by one of the hill tribes in India.

My "dag" is mounted with a curious bone hilt made for it by its former owner, and fits into a moose leather sheath embroidered handsomely with bead-work in a simple but very rich and effective pattern.



EDMONTON HUNTER'S DAG.

CHAPTER XII.

FORT EDMONTON TO THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

AUGUST 17th.—It was late in the afternoon before we got away from Edmonton, and we had only accomplished five miles when our camping time arrived. We halted by the side of a small lake. The night was beautifully clear and starry, with an aurora glancing in the skies ; I was glad to be once more under canvas, amidst the odours and sights and sounds of free nature. The grass was glittering with dew ; it grew rank and high, but luxuriant as it was, there were no mosquitoes harbouring in it. Some touch of frost had doubtless annihilated them, for the extreme sharpness of the air as night wore on, showed only too plainly that summer was gone by, and that even the sunniest days would now be followed by hard and bitter nights.

August 18th.—There was pleasant travelling to-day, through a pretty country,—wooded for the most part, except where a great fire had done its work of destruction, leaving only the timber that was growing in the deeper hollows. Firs now appeared plentifully in the forest, and the trees were altogether larger than any we had lately met with. Towards afternoon we entered a very hilly district, studded with numerous small lakes, and covered with the richest grass ; we rode on till dusk, and finally camped at a place about ten miles distant from the mission settlement of Lake St. Ann.

August 19th.—When not far from St. Ann we were met by Mr. Moberly, of the Company's service, who was making

his return from Jasper's House, where he had till lately been officer in charge. He obligingly halted with us for an hour or two, while I wrote some letters to go with his party.

His account of the post he had so recently quitted was very far from encouraging :—no game in the neighbourhood ; the people starving, and making haste to leave the desolated place. He advised me not to waste time by going to Jasper's House, but to track up the M'Leod river, which would bring me sooner to the mountains, and save me a perfectly useless round. The highest peaks, he informed me, rose near the point at which I should in that case enter ; and southwards from thence to the head of the South Saskatchewan, there extended about a ten days' march of country, which, as he believed, no European had ever seen (one half-breed hunter, perhaps, had long ago been there, but it was very doubtful), where bears and wild sheep were certain to be abundant. Should we meet a hunter named Paulette, as would probably happen, he strongly advised me to engage him. If I made this journey, however, it would be impossible to get back to Carlton before the end of October.—Be it so ! said I.

On our arrival at St. Ann, we proceeded to the mission-house, where we met with a most cordial reception.—'Had the pleasure of dining with Pères Lacome and Le Frain at the Roman Catholic mission-house—agreeable men and perfect gentlemen. What an advantage Rome has in this respect—Protestants constantly send vulgar, underbred folk to supply their missions, Rome sends polished, highly-educated gentlemen. Then how much the best is her mode of addressing the Indian mind ;—for example, every Indian who joins the Mission Temperance Society is given a handsome model to wear.' [This appeals to their pride or vanity, and is far more effectual than mere dry exhortations.]

On the pressing invitation of my kind hosts I remained for the night at the mission-house.—‘Everything there is wonderfully neat and flourishing, it is a true oasis in the desert. The cows fat and fine, the horses the same, the dogs, the very cats, the same. A well-arranged and well-kept garden, gay with many flowers—[some of them the commonest flowers of the woods and plains, brought to perfection by care and labour]. The house beautifully clean; the meals served up as in a gentleman’s dining-room. Excellent preserves of service-berries and wild raspberries;—everything made use of and turned to account.’

Surrounded by such comfort and refinement, and in the society of such agreeable entertainers, I passed a most pleasant evening, one that often recalled itself to my memory amidst the experiences of later times.

The rooms were decorated with religious prints, and there was likewise a good library of books of a similar character. In my own bedroom were several of the latter, which I looked through with interest, among them, however, was one which it surprised me to find in such honourable company—a cheap Dublin publication called *The Life of the Virgin Mary*, a pamphlet, ‘full of falsehoods as gravely told and reasoned on as any chapter in Baron Munchausen’s travels.’ [Such childish fables, though possibly attractive to simple-minded people in other lands, seemed to me ill adapted to impress the Indians, who are not wanting in shrewdness, and whose own supernaturalism is of a grave and sombre character. But the success of the mission convinces one that this foolish book could not have been in general use, whatever accident had brought it all the way from Ireland.]

‘Lake St. Ann is a sheet of water about seven miles long. The Indians call it Great Spirit Lake; it is also known by

the name of God's Lake.' [It was sometimes designated Manito Lake, which merely means *Spirit* Lake, a prefix being required to denote whether a good or an evil spirit is intended.]

August 20th.—Much as I liked St. Ann I should not have stayed there so long, time being precious, but for the hope of buying a few more horses. There was one black cob in particular that I greatly fancied, but I found he was not to be thought of, having been given to the missionaries as a token of gratitude by an Indian who had met with some remarkable kindness at their hands. Père Lacome, however, anxious to oblige me, though the mission itself was not over well supplied, brought me two very good horses this morning,—one of them a fine strong cendré, the other a useful bay,—which I bought for £19 apiece; at the same time I purchased a bag of excellent pemmican. I also bought from M. André Cardinal, for £20, a large brown horse that went by the name of "Brun Farouche."

'I felt quite sorry to leave St. Ann, all was so kindly and pleasant at the Mission. The good fathers loaded us with provisions—fish, potatoes, dried meat, etc. God bless them and prosper their mission!'

It was about 11 o'clock when we set out; we dined at Sturgeon Creek, and halted for the night on the shore of Lac des Isles, a narrow lake about twelve miles long, with many low wooded islands. 'The whole of the day our road was extremely bad, running through dense woods, chiefly of poplar brush with a few firs, and often through deep morasses filled with fallen timber. It was one incessant struggle. There was no longer a road wide enough for carts, only a narrow foot track, and the horses had to force their way through the brush, which tore everything to pieces. One's gun had to be carried under the arm instead of across the saddle, which was

very tiring at first, especially with a strong double-barrelled rifle like mine. I rode the Pitt Bichon after dinner. He is not good in mire, and rolled over on his side in one deep place, after sticking on the concealed trunk of a sunken tree.'

The day had been fine and sunny, it was succeeded by a brilliant starlit night. As I stood at my tent-door a little after midnight, I beheld in the heavens before me the magnificent Orion group, and Aldebaran with his kindred stars, constellations I had not looked on for many a week; but the beautiful luminary Spica Virginis was no longer visible.

Sunday, August 21st.—Our camping ground was bad, so we marched a few miles along a better road than yesterday's, and halted when we came to a sort of prairie on a hill at the end of the Lac des Isles.

August 22d.—Matheson was taken ill in the night, and continued in a good deal of suffering. I prescribed some simple remedies from my medicine store, and by evening he was nearly well again.

Soon after starting we crossed Pembina River, a shallow stream about sixty yards wide, flowing in a rapid current over a bed of stones and gravel. The banks were very pretty; not monotonous, but broken and varied like those of a highland river. Not more than half-a-mile of its course could be seen from our crossing-place; below us it wound out of sight, between high steep banks with rocks breaking through the soil and trees scattered here and there; upstream, the shores were lower and less rugged, but, immediately above us, the right-hand bank was perfectly bare of wood, and shaped itself into a high terrace of almost artificial appearance, carpeted all over with short and mossy turf.

Our dinner halt was beside Buffalo Creek, a flat-shored, stony-bedded stream, smaller and less rapid than the Pembina.

A quantity of trees, long ago cut down by beavers, lay scattered about the place, and when we camped at sunset we saw more of their work, for our tents were pitched on a meadow of the richest pasturage, which had once been the bed of a lake formed by these curious animals in days gone by. The dams were almost entire, and very easily traceable, though quite overgrown with grass and herbage.

The country, all that day, was tolerably dry, though thickly covered with wood, and flat for the most part, except at the descents into river valleys; the track was better than it sometimes had been, but we had hard fighting to get through the brush, which was chiefly poplar intermixed with young firs, with a few larger ones here and there.

No woollen clothes, but the stoutest, can stand against these horrible thickets, full of sharp ends of broken branches of dead fir-trees concealed among the unyielding foliage of the young poplars. Fortunately I had clad myself in Mr. Hardisty's present—the leather hunting-shirt, which was very comfortable, as well as a complete protection against the hardened spikes that met one at every turn. All the men had come out in leather since we entered the wood country, and looked infinitely more picturesque and sportsmanlike than when dressed in their blue cloth capots. Some of them had mounted little blue caps, covered with streamers of ribbon of different colours,—after the gay fashion of Saskatchewan-land, where taste seems freer to indulge its fancies than in the graver regions of Fort Garry.

No traces of large game had yet appeared, but there were vast numbers of ducks; Munroe and Antoine, who had walked on in advance, brought in ten couple of them, and could easily have shot more. We also saw a good many pigeons, one of which I shot with my rifle. They were plump, compact little birds, and made delicious eating.

August 23d.—The country continued much the same in character, but, for the first time, a few larches showed themselves. Not a tree of any size was visible ; one everywhere beheld the ruins of burnt pines, amidst hosts of poplars and young seedlings, chiefly of the Black American and Scotch Fir varieties, already nearly filling up the vacant ground. To-day we were constantly among alder brush, and had much trouble and difficulty in getting through it.

One of the horses belonging to the Company's lot strayed from the others, and though Mackay followed it a long way into the thickets he finally lost its track, and we never heard of it again. [When this happens, a horse is sometimes recovered long afterwards ; but it more often perishes, especially if it has strayed towards the winter time, and at any rate it seldom comes back to the rightful owner.]

After dinner I rode forward with André Cardinal (who was accompanying us for part of the journey), and made some good rifle practice at birds on the trees near the track side, shooting, through the neck or head, one "partridge,"—or rather *grouse*, of the sort that perches in trees, and tastes of fir-tops,*—and two pigeons, the latter at forty and seventy yards.

Our camp for the night was formed beside Buffalo Creek, which we had crossed the previous day, and now re-crossed. There was a glimpse of the outskirts of the mountains in the direction of the Athabasca, but it was a dim and far-off view, many a long mile having to be accomplished ere we could traverse the intervening space.

August 24th.—There were distant thunderstorms and threatenings of rain all night, but the weather kept fair

* *Tetrao Canadensis*. *The Spotted Grouse*. *Wood, or Spruce, or Swamp Partridge*—Hudson's Bay Residents. *Mistic-apeetheyoo, or Eithinyoo-apeetheyoo*—Crees. *Le Perdrix du savanne*—French Canadians. RICHARDSON,—*Faun. Bor.-Am.*, vol. ii. p. 346.

though very cold, and after dawn the sun came out brilliantly. Two more of the horses chose to wander, but they were recovered without much trouble, and then we began a very hard and toilsome march, plunging through bogs—which, in Cree fashion, we commonly called “Muskegs”—and forcing a passage through brush and thickets of young pine. Our track fortunately kept pretty level, though the country was inclined to hilliness. In course of the day we crossed the forks of a tributary of the M’Leod,—two streams known as *Les Deux Rivières*, clear mountain rivulets running swiftly over thin beds of gravel,—and about 5 P.M. we came to another stream, named Thick Brush Creek, where we found a Jasper’s House Iroquois camping with his family, consisting of his wife, two children, and a servant girl.

As it was then too late to go on to the M’Leod river, the road being bad and destitute of camping-ground, we determined to halt where we were; accordingly we pitched our tents not far from the place chosen by our new friends.

This had been a most fatiguing day. In many parts the track was barely wide enough for a loaded animal to pass between the trees, and it was generally so soft and deep, from the effects of former traffic on such wet and sponge-like soil, that the horses were for ever trying to escape from the treacherous boggy ditch in which they found themselves. Leaping to one or other side of the trench, they endeavoured to make their way along the firmer margin; but there was seldom much room there, so after a struggle that displaced or scattered their packs, down they inevitably plunged, and continued their floundering in the mire. In riding it was the same thing; no power or skill could keep one’s horse in the narrow, slimy track. So at least I found it, and by the end of the day my knees were one mass of bruises,

from cannoning off the fir stems, when Rowland made sudden dashes for the bank, or attempted to rush into some opening where the trees grew wide enough apart to allow a passage for himself, though none for his rider's limbs.

My arms were worn out from carrying the rifle, without support, during such long-continued exertions.—'Quite exhausted tired, and disgusted at the small progress we are making. . . . Thank God, however, I am in good health; and cannot remember having yet yielded to fatigue, or allowed anything but reason or sport to prevent me from pressing forward. If ever I get home I shall know how to appreciate comfort. Still, health is better than comfort.'

That evening I read with particular pleasure some articles in the *North British Review*, of which I had lately got a few numbers at one of the forts. [I believe intellectual reading, in moderation, to be a rest for the body after hard labour: it seems to act as a counter-irritant, drawing off fatigue from the muscles to the brain.]

While passing through a sandy place, where the fir-tree roots ran near to the surface of the ground, Matheson's horse happened to disturb a wasp's nest;—then such a scene began! Frantic with terror, the horses rushed hither and thither; Wawbee, maddest of all, galloped wildly up and down, lashing out at the enraged insects. Poor Matheson, in desperation, sprung from his uneasy saddle, but, lighting on a sharp-pointed stump, slipped, and rolled under his horse's feet,—the animal instantly set-to to kick at its fallen rider, fortunately never striking his head, though missing so narrowly as to graze one of his cheeks. We were laughing too much to help him; but he soon escaped, and we all got off without visible damage, though several of the horses must have been badly stung.

Cardinal, while out shooting alone, killed a skunk, and brought it into camp that evening. I afterwards saw it roasting whole over the Iroquois' fire, looking awfully hideous, robbed of its skin and ears, and shorn of the bushy tail which in life had added something to its beauty.

August 25th.—As a matter of curiosity I had a hind-leg of the skunk for breakfast.* It tasted like sucking-pig; very white, soft, and fat, but there was a suspicion of *skunkiness* about it that prevented me from finishing the plateful.†



SKUNK ROASTING.

'On resuming our march the road was bad for a while, then came a great stretch of really fine old forest, consisting of spruce firs and a few immense poplars. The largest trees were not above eight or ten feet round, I should think, but all were from 150 to 200 feet high, or more.

'Shot three "partridges," with my rifle, at thirty, ten, and fifteen yards, hitting all of them in the neck, as I intended. We crossed the M'Leod river, after which I bathed and dined. It is a stream from 100 to 150 yards wide hereabouts; for the most part shallow and rapid, with a gravelly bed but muddy banks, the mud of a lightish brown, as in all these

* See extract from Hearne, p. 136, *ante*.

† Let me here, once for all, deprecate censure from fastidious readers, in regard to the minuteness of my gastronomic details. No question is more frequently asked of the traveller, than—What is such and such a beast, bird, or fish fit for as an article of food? Being able, through my careful note-keeping, to meet, in some degree, the general wish for this sort of information, ought I—O considerate critic!—to deprive the many of a boon, out of deference to the probable or possible objections of the few?

rivers. The banks, wooded to the water's edge, are rather low, though in some places rising to a greater elevation.

'The Iroquois and his family are travelling with us. His wife is a good-looking, clear-skinned, black-haired, French half-breed, too flat in her proportions like all her race. Her dress is of dark blue cloth. She and the girl ride astride, of course, but quite modestly, wrapping up their legs in the shawls in which they carry the little children.

'The wife rides a very pretty grey-and-white pied mare, with two bells round its neck, which make a pleasant rural sound; these are not mere ornaments, but are meant to scare away wolves, and very generally do so. Mares are seldom or never ridden in this country, except by women. There are more geldings than stallions, though the latter are far from uncommon.'

After dinner we crossed the Wolf River, a moderate-sized, rapid stream running into the M'Leod; and subsequently the road, which led us up the course of the latter stream, ran mostly through a wood of some age, and was here and there intersected by very steeply-banked gullies.

A thunderstorm came on, and gave us a wetting before we reached our camping-ground at a place called Brazeau's Cache; the storm then settled into steady rain, which continued for most of the night.



WOODEN SPUR.

Our party at supper was increased by two of the Jasper's House men, whom we met on their way to the settlements, they turned back, however, and camped with us. One of them wore a wooden spur of the most primitive construction,—merely a piece of fir pointed at one end, and hollowed at the other to receive the heel, to which it was tied by two thin strips of leather. I got some "sheep" pemmican

from these hunters, and thought it very good,—rather sweeter, and perhaps a little richer, than the common buffalo pemmican ; it was entirely made from the dried flesh of the wild mountain sheep.

The Iroquois family still accompanied us.—‘It sounds curious at night to hear a baby crying, so far away in the heart of the wilderness.’

August 26th.—Made a late start,—to give the bushes time to dry after the heavy rain, wet being most damaging to saddle-bags and all other leathern articles.

‘Very feverish all this morning, but two cups of tea at dinner did me a great deal of good. Tea is a wonderful restorative—when taken as by us, without milk, and with no spirituous liquors in our systems.

‘Our march all day was up the M’Leod River. For nearly the whole distance the banks were very high, and covered with tolerably large pines ; here and there were precipitous faces of rock and clay. Towards evening we crossed a rapid stream flowing into the larger river, which makes a sudden bend at that place. As we moved round the curve along the water-edge, the setting sun poured floods of light on the russet brown masses of scorched pines, on the one side, while, on the other, the darkly-green young spruces looked black in shadow.

‘Just before, I had been struck with admiration at the sombre loveliness caused by the streaming of the sun’s rays through a great stretch of burnt pine forest. All the tall trees were standing up like jet black masts, and the glorious light gleamed like silver on the quivering surface of the river, gilded the sable stems wherever it touched them, and played in dancing spots over the long grass, and on the low undergrowth of poplars—destined in course of years to fill the

place of the for-ever blighted wood. I wish some painter had been there, to paint what I so vainly attempt to describe. Never have I seen such an effect represented in art—withered and dead trees often, but not these scorched, and charred, and blackened stems.'

Soon after leaving this beautiful scene, we camped on an opening a few acres in size—here regarded as an extensive plain. The mountains ought now to have been in view, but there was a mist over them, and they were entirely hidden.

August 27th.—A long hard march this morning, one of the most toilsome we had yet had. It rained more or less the whole time, and the wind was cold ; the road ran mostly through deep wet bogs, full of small fir-trees. My knees and legs were severely bruised by awkward Rowland's dashes among the trees ; in one place he got mired, and I had to jump off and wade through depths of moss. The road was perpetually crossing ravines, up and down the steepest hills,—I wondered the horses could climb them.

One solitary gleam of consolation enlivened this weary day—an unexpected, far-distant view of two grand peaks of the Rocky Mountains, over which a thunder-cloud cast a solemn, leaden shade. It was but an imperfect view, but so marvellous was the contrast between the damp, confined darkness of our track through the dripping fir-trees, and the sudden freedom of an open sky bounded only by magnificent mountain-forms, that for a moment I was quite overwhelmed. Then one of those strange tides of emotion that transcend both control and analysis, rushed through me from head to foot,—I trembled all over,—my limbs lost their strength, I could hardly sit on my horse. He, poor beast, did not share in his rider's excitement—as in a momentary fancy I thought he would,—and seemed no happier than before ;

but, for my own part, all weariness vanished away, and I felt myself ready for any labours that might bring me nearer to so splendid a goal.

In course of the morning we made our second crossing of the M'Leod, and not long afterwards we crossed one of its tributaries, a stream about half its size, called the Rivière d'Embarras, or Lying-wood River, whose banks in this vicinity were broken by steep, low rocks, resembling in character those at Guy's Cliff near Warwick. Whisky looked funnier than ever in his passage through the shallow stream, half wading half swimming, with his fat sides bent into an arch by the weight of the impetuous current, and his odd little stump of a tail up-



WHISKY.

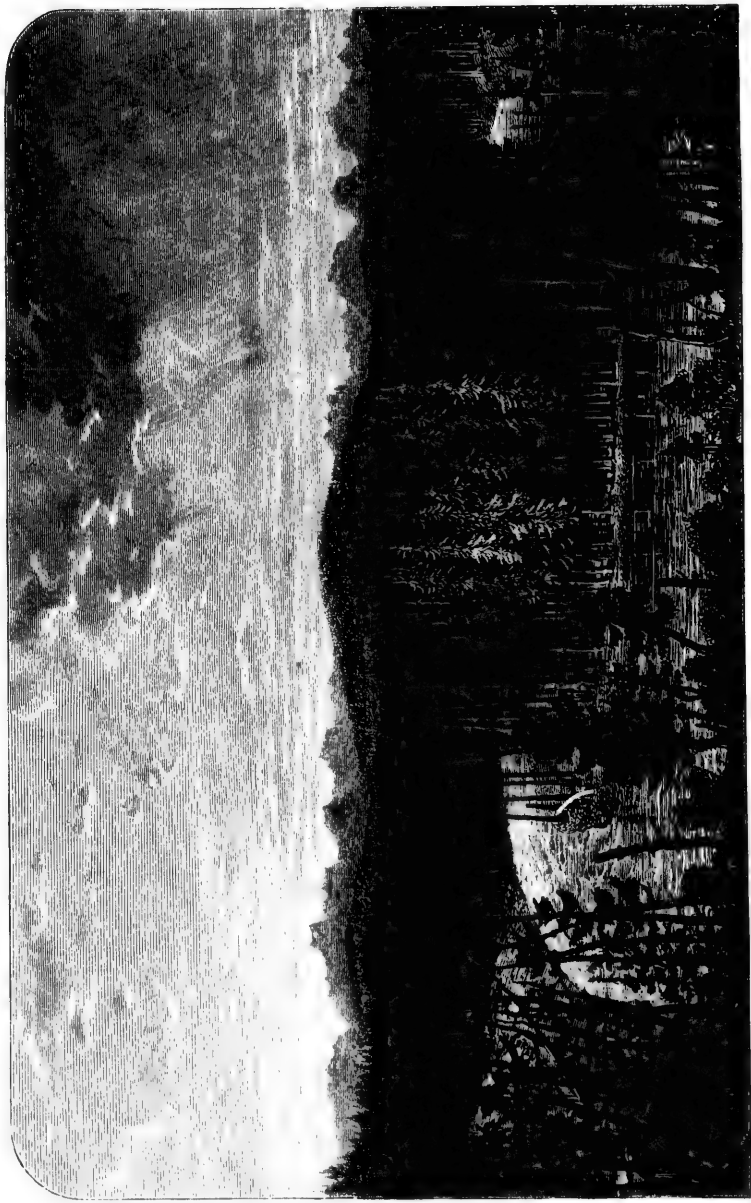
pointed to the skies, flirting bright water about like a sea-god's shell in a fountain. [Poor Whisky filled the place of the ancient domestic jester; one look at him dispelled melancholy; every movement he made was a farce. With his cunningly timorous countenance and sleekly rounded plebeian body, he was a true Sancho Panza of dogs. He was a daily delight: I would not have exchanged him for the best dog in the Company's territories.] It was a good deal past our usual dinner-time when we halted near a small camp of half-breed hunters, who hospitably presented us with some wild raspberries they had just been gathering.

'The clouds blew off, and the day became sunny and very pleasant. I rode forward as usual with old Antoine, and presently, arriving at the brow of a hill that overhangs the

Embarras, a glorious sight opened upon my view—the Rocky Mountain range, stretching along the horizon far as the eye could reach. Below us rolled the river among dark pines ; hills, also covered with pines—some black and scorched with fire, some green and flourishing,—filled up the prospect for many miles ; then came flat bare eminences, the footstools of the loftier range, and then uprose the mountains themselves, rugged in form, peaked and tabled, and scored with gashes, — not magnified hills, but rocks in the very archetype. Too remote to display any smaller modulations, they rose flat against the blue sky, themselves all steeped in a soft mellow grey from summit to base ; but in certain ravines, and on some of the high shoulders of the greater peaks, spots and masses of snow glittered in the sun, or looked cold as death where no rays were able to reach them.

‘With feelings almost too deep for utterance, I turned to Antoine, hoping to find in him some sympathetic response. His eyes gleamed and sparkled as they met mine ; with a pleasant smile he pointed first to the nearer hills, then to the grand range that stretched far away beyond : “Monsieur Milord,” said he, with impressive earnestness, “il n’y a pas des moutons ici ;—mais la bas—âh ! !”

‘Taking a rough piece of paper from my pocket, I made a hasty sketch of the principal peaks, after which we rejoined the men, and then all descended to the Embarras and crossed it again. From this, half-an-hour’s riding brought us to a glade where three or four Iroquois and half-breed hunters were encamped with their families, and there we halted, in the hope of getting horses and other things that were required. Tents being pitched, I walked a mile or two, expecting to see the mountains again from a different point, but owing to the nature of the ground I could only discern the tops of a few lofty peaks.



THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS, FROM THE EMBARRAS RIVER. (See p. 180.)

'Moose at supper: excellent though rather tough; the fat delicious. How one longs for a good larder and an educated cook!'

Sunday, August 28th.—The night was intensely cold; hoar frost covered all the ground, some water in a basin was frozen nearly half-an-inch thick; but the heat became too great after the sun got fairly up, and poured down his powerful rays into the sheltered valley.

At dinner I was presented with another new dish, in the form of the last joints of a beaver's back-bone.—'Exquisite: tender white lean, melting fat, like sucking-pig but better, without the least over-richness of taste, and free from the painful suspicions which interfere with the enjoyment of roast skunk.'

I afterwards rode to the point whence my previous sketch of the mountain had been taken, and made a more careful drawing of the same subject. There was a haze over the mountains themselves, though the sky was cloudless elsewhere; the obscurity, however, being only partial, I got in their general features pretty accurately, notwithstanding the bad quality of the materials I had to work with.

'The wife of one of the hunters has made me a gun-cover of moose leather, ornamented with fringes and narrow braidings of red and black cloth, after the picturesque fashion of the country.' [It was the custom to keep one's gun covered, except when wanted for immediate use. This protected it from bad weather, and kept it from injury when carried across the saddle. My Fort Garry cover was merely of buffalo skin, which, being little better than wash-leather, was neither strong enough for mountain work, nor thick enough in continuous rain. Duncan and Toma, who carried my smooth-bores after we left the carts behind us, had only common waterproof

covers, but the stuff gradually wore into holes, and the guns suffered a little from want of protection.]

‘These hunters are fine-looking men ; dressed either in the usual fringed leather hunting-shirts, or in blue cloth capots. Their caps are of blue cloth, small, with a leather shade, and covered with streamers of ribbon, chiefly black, blue, and red.

‘They have large herds of excellent horses—ponies we should call them at home,—among them several stallions. One pretty brown pony passed us, carrying a little girl five or six years old, who was riding quite alone. Near one of the tents I saw two girls, of much the same age, cleaning a beaver-skin with a bone, while two others were cutting up fat with great knives. Think of that, A— and C—!’

The baby of our fellow-traveller Pierre, the Iroquois, was taken ill at night, and the father, in great anxiety, sent John M’Kay to ask me to come and give it medicine. I went immediately to see the little patient. Its mother sat crying at the tent door in front of a wretched fire, holding the child nearly naked on her lap, and her husband leant over her with miserable looks, and eyes all full of tears. An old woman crouched near them in silence.

I felt very sorry for them, and hoped that Heaven would enable me to do their child some good. It seemed probable it had got a chill in the frosty nights we had lately been having ; for it was dry and feverish, and inclined to sickness, though there was no diarrhœa ; and I began to consider how one might best help nature, while soothing the parents by some show of active measures. I dared not give medicine, knowing that pills and powders fit for men might kill a ten-month baby,—fearing, besides, lest if the child died I should be held by these untaught people the cause of its death, according to a prevalent Indian fancy.

After a moment's thought I put on an air of decision, and desired that the fire should be made as large as possible, and the poor naked child very closely wrapt up in several shawls and blankets. These orders were obeyed with some signs of reviving cheerfulness, and Mackay presently returned from our camp bringing a pot of weak tea, which I had sent him to get ready.

I then directed the mother to hold her baby close to the fire, and pour tea down its throat, as much as it could be made to swallow. With perfect confidence in my skill, she took a spoon and began the feeding process, which so greatly disgusted the child, that it struggled and screamed, and rejected the tea, till, between its own efforts and the heat of the blazing logs, a little moisture began to appear. Telling them to keep the baby warm, as they valued its life, I left them and returned to my tent, and next morning had the happiness of hearing that the treatment had been a complete success.

'After nightfall there was a most beautiful aurora ; sometimes like a tent, with streams proceeding earthwards in every direction from a fixed central point, sometimes like a very grand arch stretching from east to west through Arcturus, Vega, Cygnus, and the neighbouring stars. Then it became a mass of glowing red, spreading over the eastern side of the heavens, and gradually passing to the south. Old Antoine said that he had never seen an aurora in the south before. The Indians believe these lights to be the spirits of men dancing in the sky.'

August 29th.—This morning was occupied in buying and exchanging horses. We bartered a Sharp's rifle belonging to Mackay for a strong three-year-old black horse, and exchanged La Framboise, who was nearly done out, for a good

skewbald ; we also gave £12, with a Company's horse, which was temporarily lame and unable to go on, to one of the hunters, named Eneas Oneanti, in exchange for a very handsome stallion, black, flecked with grey, and with a few small spots of white. Half his face, his nose, and his legs, were also white. This pony stood about fourteen hands high ; he was seven years old, and a perfect model of strength and compactness. They called him "Coi-fesse," which was said to mean "spotted thigh," but disliking this ugly word I named him "Jasper," as he belonged to the Jasper's House district. When first I saw him he was wandering with a herd of very handsome little mares, about twenty of them roaming freely together in the glades of the beautiful pine forest.

'From Oneanti we also got a fine old white mare named "Moutonne," in exchange for Bleu. She is twenty years old, —but that counts for nothing here, and she is as fresh and active as a filly. Her right haunch shows a terrible scar, large and deep enough to hold both one's hands, made by the wolves when she was young.

'When these arrangements were finished we set out, but before we had gone far, Eneas came riding up to complain of the bargain about the mare, as he found Bleu a less good riding-horse than he had supposed. He wanted the little cream-colour instead.

'After explaining to him that I felt no way bound to yield anything, especially as he himself had proposed the exchange, I told him that I would let him have the horse he wanted—which he knew all about—rather than leave him dissatisfied with my dealings. He hesitated a little, then jumped off Bleu and changed the saddle to the other. Poor Crème looked meek and sorrowful, and his eyes appeared (as I have seen a wounded doe's) all suffused with tears. He is a soft, weak-

spirited little horse, with beauty and gentleness for his only merits. As he seemed ill, he had been spared much as possible since we left St. Ann. Poor fellow! he seemed to have sad forebodings of rough treatment and hard work in store; and looked so piteously that I felt quite unhappy. However, there is little scope for sentiment when travelling through these wildernesses: horses must be got, and if the bad ones cannot be exchanged they must go on till they drop,—such is the law of the position.

‘The Iroquois and his pretty wife were still following us, though moving at a slower pace, and it was proposed to make an early halt, evidently to let them come up. I was told that this was the last open spot, that then came a bad muskeg, etc., but after cross-questioning M’Kay and Antoine I determined to proceed, not finding it satisfactory to travel with other people, for, as in the present case, it tended to shorten the marches, and otherwise interfered with my arrangements. Besides, instead of my men sitting all sociably round the fire when we halted at night, some of them had begun to go to their new friends—more especially those who talked Indian,—so that my party was in danger of splitting into sections.

‘We marched accordingly; and, as I had guessed, soon passed by several fair camping places,—the muskeg being a very small one,—and, after two hours’ work, halted in an excellent place beside the river. During the march I shot three wood-grouse with the rifle, cutting off the heads of two of them. We crossed the Embarras ten times.

‘Took my first ride on Jasper, and found him very quiet, sure-footed, and strong, but lazy. Catching sight of my shooting boots, he could not be happy till he had turned round and touched them with his nose (never having seen anything

but moccasins before), after which he paid them no further attention. We picketed him and Moutonne to-night, lest they should try to return to their old quarters.

'Beaver tail for supper—like pork fat sandwiched between layers of Finnan haddock.'

August 30th.—A bitterly cold night; in no way could I manage to shut out the keen frost and keep myself tolerably warm. Our start was early, and by dinner-time we had crossed the Embarras six times more, it was never deeper, however, than to wet one's foot when riding a fourteen-hand pony.

We passed rapidly through many a glade of fine grass, amidst the masses of young and middle-aged fir-wood, but there were also numerous muskegs to encounter. Jasper was an admirable horse for this work. He cared nothing for muskegs, however deep and bad; even when sinking in a swamp he would take the opportunity to snatch a bite of grass if his nose got near enough the surface. Greediness was one of his faults. Sometimes, while drawing himself over a log, he would stop half-way, and begin eating a tempting mouthful that happened to lie handy. He was very gentle and quiet; I never knew him fidgetty, except once, when a wasp stung him.

We crossed the Embarras no less than thirty-one times after dinner,—thirty-seven times in all during the day,—as we threaded the winding course of the river, going up its deep and narrow valley. The hills on each side were becoming steeper, higher, and more rugged, though still pine-covered to the top.

There was a slight thunderstorm, but on the whole it had been a fine day. We came upon the tracks of a moose, but neither saw the animal itself, nor game of any sort,—except wood-grouse, of which I shot two with the rifle, decapitating one of the pair.

August 31st.—Crossed the Embarras three or four times more, then finally left it, and struck across hills covered with well-grown pines, and valleys obstructed by deep bogs, passing also through several large openings, mostly of a very swampy character. Old camps and other traces of the Assiniboines were numerous,—which quite accounted for the scarcity of game in the district. We now again came to the M'Leod River,—about forty yards wide, shallow and rapid ; and parted there from one of the Iroquois (not our old friend Pierre, but a hunter of the same band), who had for the last day or two accompanied us,—our ways diverging, his destination being Jasper's House, while we proceeded up stream by the shortest road to the mountains.

We crossed the M'Leod several times, threading its course as we travelled along the valley. The timber was of considerable growth ; there were very good spruces and firs, but they had been terribly spoilt by the Indians, who had more or less barked them to extract the sap.

'Before dinner I rode Jasper, who sailed like a strong ship through the bogs ; in the afternoon, Cendré,—much refreshed by the long rest I have given him.

'This morning's work has been very severe for our horses, the fallen trees on the steep hill-sides being so numerous, and often so large, that progress was slow and toilsome. It is amusing to watch the different horses going over the great trunks, some jumping, while others creep and scramble. Old Lagrace, as usual, has a way of his own—he stands on the trees, and makes his horse leap them by hauling at him with a line. He has decorated his white flannel cap with a strip of scarlet cloth, which presents a most imposing appearance.

'This evening the men started the plan of two separate camp fires—for the first time. I disapprove of this arrange-

ment, because it either breaks up the party into sections, or else they all go to one of the fires, which is naturally that farthest from my tent, so that I am left alone, and a stronger line of demarcation is drawn between me and my people. I hope to put things right without much difficulty, by manner rather than words.

'The Saskatchewan men have not added to the workability of the party, though good enough men in themselves. [There was not quite the same orderly and cordial spirit that existed before their arrival.] Last Saturday I had to find fault decidedly, because, in order to keep up with the free-men, M'Kay hurried over breakfast and started the men before I was ready. He took my reproof admirably, and has been doubly attentive ever since. I believe it was a fault of inadvertency.'

[After hesitating whether or not to suppress this and one or two similar entries in my journal, I have determined to leave them : partly, because they seemed so important at the time that their omission would impair the faithfulness of the narrative ; partly, because I am glad of opportunities to show that my praises of the excellent fellows who accompanied me are not empty panegyrics, but that I can plainly state all, or nearly all, of the few and trivial instances in which I had reason for dissatisfaction with them, during the many months we travelled together over the prairie and the mountain.]

CHAPTER XIII.

MEDICINE TENT RIVER AND NORTH RIVER CAMPS.

SEPTEMBER 1st.—After breakfast Antoine and I rode forward together up the M'Leod valley, and crossed the river a dozen times at least. The mountains now appeared close in front of us. One of them particularly struck me from its resemblance to Arthur's Seat, near Edinburgh ; it was similar in shape, and apparently in formation, though on a greatly magnified scale. There was no snow upon it, even in the higher regions, except a few streaks about the northern face.

'As we were riding past a deep pool as clear as crystal, at the foot of a low but rugged crag, old Antoine paused and eyed it attentively,—admiring its beauty I hoped,—and almost believed, on seeing him stop again and gaze even more attentively at another rock and pool a little farther on. He has some sense of the beautiful, after all, said I to myself. "Milord !" said he, "les petits poissons :"—and immediately began to make a rough fishing rod.'

We rejoined the rest of the party, then all halted for dinner, in the midst of noble scenery, and while the horses grazed among the scattered rocks and fir-trees, and the men smoked and chatted good-humouredly together, I passed a very pleasant hour in reading "Macbeth."

Continuing our march up the M'Leod, we presently entered a fine rocky gorge, between the "Arthur's Seat" mountain and another of less remarkable appearance, and

after a few miles of easy travelling, reached a point where a smaller stream flowed into the river in a succession of picturesque cascades. Our track now diverged, and passed up the course of the stream and close beside the waterfalls; it was an unfrequented road, and we found it a good deal blocked with brush, and altogether out of order; but a little axe work soon cleared away the impediments, and we made the ascent without accident.

'At the top of the rapids the valley showed a tamer character, its sides being comparatively low and covered with grass and young pines; nevertheless there were fine distant views at intervals, and when we camped for the night in a deep glen that intersected our course, a grand rocky peak could be seen crowning the end of the ravine we had chosen for our halting place. We made an enormous fire of logs—the men had taken my hint, there was but one fire*—and slept well in spite of the keenness of the frost. Nothing could exceed the beauty of the pines and firs as displayed by the light of our flaming pyramid, even the grass showed a strange ruddiness mingled with its quiet green, and the eyes of the horses wandering on the banks above us, shone like little stars rising and setting incessantly amidst deepest shades.'

September 2d.—A cold frosty night, as was now almost always the case. We continued our march up the stream of the cascades; its banks were no longer steep, but had become very tame and featureless. In one pool we surprised a family of black diving ducks, and managed to get three or four of them, which turned out particularly good eating, almost the best of their kind I ever tasted.

* In a few days we returned to the two-fire plan, finding it more convenient as the weather grew colder.

After this we observed eighteen wild sheep on the shoulder of a mountain on our right, so—directing the “brigade” to pursue its way over the low ridge before us, till they came to a valley which contained a certain small lake,—Antoine, M’Kay, and I, rode off to the foot of the hill where the animals had just been seen. Leaving our horses, we proceeded to climb the rocks, but the sheep had disappeared, probably scared by our party, which was full in sight though a considerable distance away.

‘When high among the precipices we heard some “siffleurs” whistling with their clear, bell-like, melancholy notes, and presently saw one, but out of shot. This beast, a kind of marmot, is considerably less than a badger, though not unlike one in form and colour; its tail, however, is larger and its fur finer, in these respects it more resembles the opossum. Its teeth are very long, and shaped like those of the beaver or rabbit. The rocks are its abode: probably it nearly answers to the “coney” of the Book of Proverbs.*

‘We also saw some very pretty ground-squirrels, not so large as a common rat; they were striped with yellow on a greenish grey, and had bushy tails about half the length of their bodies. Their cry is like the chirping of a bird. I did not shoot one, as my rifle bullet would have cut so small a creature into atoms.’

Having got our horses again, we climbed along the mountain-side, on tracks where I should have thought nothing but a goat could pass, and then descended to the lake, where the brigade had now already arrived. On our way we observed

* *Arctomys? Pruinus.* *The Whistler.* *The Hoary Marmot*—Pennant. *Quisquis-su*—Cree Indians. *Souffleur [Siffleur]* or *Mountain Badger*—Fur-traders. “Mr. Macpherson describes one . . . killed on the Mackenzie River. . . . It was 27½ inches long, of which the head 2¼, and the tail 8¼.” RICHARDSON,—*Faun. Bor.-Am.*, vol. i. p. 150.

a "white sheep" (mountain goat) high up on the opposite crags, and, after leaving our horses at the camp, went in search of him, but had a much longer walk and harder climb than I had expected. At length we came to within a very long shot of where he was lying, close to a sharp turn among the rocks, and I crawled on alone, bringing myself a third of the way nearer,—after a most painful stalk, for the stones cut like knives. An exceedingly careful approach brought me to a stone about 120 yards from him, but I could get no nearer: then I fired at him as he lay—for if he had risen he would have been out of sight in a moment,—and had the satisfaction of making a clean miss.

No better sport remaining, we began to roll immense stones down the steep—a favourite amusement with my men, both young and old delighting in it,—sending them crashing into a grove of small-sized fir-trees, which snapped like twigs at the stroke of the flying boulders. Then, getting caught in a shower, we made the best of our way back to camp, and reached home about nightfall.

'There we found that Munroe had shot a siffleur; and, for the first time, I had the pleasure of eating that most delicious meat, which tastes like very delicate mutton, with the fat of a sucking-pig.'

September 3d.—'The camp is surrounded with magnificent rocky heights; I leave it with sorrow. Would that it were the beginning of summer instead of the end! Had a hind-leg of siffleur for breakfast, and find it the best part. In shape and distribution of fat it is a miniature haunch of venison; it is possible to eat the whole at a meal.'

When we set out, Whisky took possession of the siffleur's head, carrying it face-foremost in the most ridiculous manner, with its rabbit teeth sticking out in front of his own, and

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MOUNT LINDSAY—NEAR MEDICINE TENT RIVER. (See p. 193.)

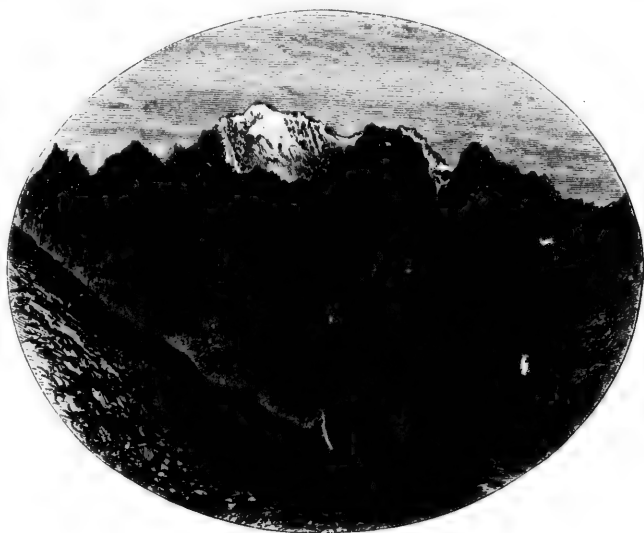
trotted beside us, exhibiting his treasure with a delightfully amusing air of self-complacent sagacity.

After crossing a river which runs in a southerly direction, [we believed it to be a branch of the "North River," as my men called it, which is a head-water of the North Saskatchewan, —possibly that termed "Brazeau River" in some of the maps], we ascended a hill, and, on gaining the top of it, came to a stream flowing with rapid current towards the west. I went alone in front of my party, following the course of the stream, and suddenly found myself stopped by a rocky gorge, through which the water rushed, partly in cascades, partly through a very deep and narrow gorge. On the banks above this place I picked up some specimens of fossil shells; then climbing the hill to my left I rejoined the brigade, having first made a sketch of a magnificent snow-crowned mountain directly opposite, on the farther side of a rather considerable stream which receives the little brook I had just been following, a stream which, according to Antoine, is called the "Medicine Tent River," and forms one of the principal head-waters of the river Athabasca.

To descend into its valley we had to go down a hill of extraordinary steepness. It was barely practicable for the pack-horses, but we reached the bottom without accident, and then pursued our way up the river with the mysterious name. At dinner-time I made a very hurried sketch of a noble mountain of black slaty rock, the last on the right as we descended the hill of difficulty, but unfortunately clouds came down and covered the curiously cloven mitre-like summit, which formed its most characteristic feature, before I had time to seize the exact outline.*

* This wild and beautiful mountain I have named *Mount Lindsay*, after my friend Sir Coutts Lindsay, Bart., of Balcarres.

‘We continued our march up the river amidst scenery of surpassing magnificence. On the left, as one proceeds, the heights are less grand, running more in a plain continuous ridge, but on the right there is a far higher wall of rock, which is broken by a succession of glorious peaks, while



MOUNTAIN IN MEDICINE TENT VALLEY.

lower precipitous spurs, divided by deep rocky glens, run outwards to the river.

‘Among the loftier mountains the most are pyramidal ; a few are more rounded in form ; some are decorated with great masses of snow glittering on their northern sides ; others are utterly unclothed except upon their grassy pine-clad feet ; but all agree in one thing—they are rock, absolute rock, without admixture of other substance. Sometimes the rocks are placed in steep piles one above the other, like heaps of

gigantic slates, far oftener they are disposed in a succession of rugged precipitous ridges. Sometimes wide tracts are covered with shingly fragments, sometimes the strata whirl in such curious fashion, that far-spreading spaces look like vast stores of petrified trees upheaved in the ruin of a dismantled world.

‘The rivers are shallow and rapid, rushing over pebbly beds; they are generally clear, but of an opaque green or muddy brown when the snow is melting fast. Their banks are bordered by wide belts of pine-trees,—chiefly Scotch and silver firs, but not without a sprinkling of spruces. These trees are small, being kept down by the cold and by frequent avalanches of snow or stones; except a few gnarled old patriarchs, none are larger than an ordinary fir of thirty years’ growth.

‘In the afternoon we passed through the ruins of a subordinate mountain, which had fallen as if shivered by lightning, and covered hundreds of acres with shattered rocks broken into the most fantastic forms.

‘The changes of temperature are very sudden in these elevated valleys. At noon we were hiding from the burning sun in any shade that could be found, in the evening we were trembling in the icy wind of a premature winter:—but there are no mosquitoes, so welcome cold, heat, wind, rain, fog, anything, if only these tormentors are cut off!

—‘Our camp was placed on a hill-side, looking down on a small lake, and within sight and sound of a waterfall. We were well supplied with food. My own supper was chiefly composed of porcupine,—Kline having killed one of these animals with a stick,—it was like siffleur, but too rich and fat. Old Lagrace had brought in a large “partridge,” a bird of the size and appearance of a grey-

hen,* which he knocked off a branch with a stone, and Antoine had been out on the mountains and shot a female wild sheep.'

Sunday, September 4th.—Mist came rolling up the valley, the night grew bitterly cold : I pulled a blanket over my head, but could still feel the icy air striking sharply on my face ; then I burrowed among three blankets and heaped all my clothes upon them, and managed to get a little sleep, but it was not till the sun rose that I found myself at all comfortable. For breakfast, this morning, had roast ribs of sheep—a better flavoured meat than common mutton.

After dinner, I set out with M'Kay, M'Beath, Duncan, and Antoine, and climbed to the top of the mountain that stands across the end of the valley. It was hard work, the excessively steep slopes being covered with loose shingle which yielded to our feet, but perseverance at length succeeded, and we reached the summit. There was little view, as the mist hung thick over all but a few of the mountains. In the valley beneath us we saw a number of wild sheep, no rams however, only young males, or females with their lambs.

Before quitting our elevation we set to work piling up big stones, and built a sort of rough tower, or cairn, some six feet high, on the highest and most commanding point, as a memorial of our visit ; then we descended more quickly than was altogether agreeable.

Whisky, full of misplaced zeal, followed me to the very top, advancing with steady steps, though much more slowly than we did ; but in returning he got daunted by the perils

* Probably the female of the Dusky Grouse—(*Tetrao Obscurus*). RICHARDSON,—*Faun. Bor.-Am.*, vol. ii. p. 344. The female is nineteen inches long,—much the size of the female Black-cock, which it also seems to resemble in plumage.

of the way, and began to show signs of alarm, stopping with bewildered looks when he came to the dangerous descents, then creeping a step or two forward, but so lingeringly, that, by the time we were half-way down, he looked a mere black speck in the upper region, where our new monument was standing in all its pride.

Lagrace came into camp soon after, bringing a large porcupine which he and Pointer had secured between them. That unlucky dog, having followed it by scent, had seized it so rashly as to get his mouth struck through with quills, some of which took such firm hold that we were unable to draw them out. [Of this animal (*Hystrix pilosus*—*The Canada porcupine*, termed *Cawquaw* by the Cree Indians), Sir John Richardson writes—"Its quills . . . are rough, with minute teeth directed backwards. . . . These spines, which are detached from the porcupine by the slightest touch, and probably by the will of the animal, soon fill the mouths of the dogs which worry it, and unless the Indian women carefully pick them out, seldom fail to kill them. Wolves occasionally die from the same cause."—*Faun. Bor.-Am.*, vol. i. p. 214-15. I suppose that Lagrace, who had taken Pointer under his special charge, afterwards succeeded in extracting the quills; at all events, the dog was none the worse of the adventure.]

September 5th.—Early in the morning, while half asleep after a very wakeful and uncomfortable night, McKay roused me up, reporting a grisly bear to be in view. Dashing on my clothes I started in pursuit, carrying a gun on each shoulder, Robinson Crusoe fashion—my rifle for a long shot, and the smoothbore with the big bullet for close quarters,—Lagrace and Antoine following with other weapons. The bear, however, having seen our camp, or perhaps winded it, made off at

a rapid pace, and, after two hours of fatiguing climbing in the chaos of the landslide, I had to return without the sport I had so fully expected. When on my way home, a siffleur suddenly appeared on a rock beside me ; I shot him dead ; immediately afterwards, a very pretty silvery-grey one came running past, and met with the same fate as its companion. The former was a male, the latter a female ; and both being good specimens, I had their skins preserved.* Siffleurs are hard to get hold of, for, unless shot, quite dead, they scramble into their holes like wounded rabbits.

On arriving at camp, I found the men impatient to set out on a sheep-hunt they had been promised for to-day. I breakfasted very hurriedly, intending to go with them ; but changed my mind, and took a short rest instead,—feeling the morning's work, as I was rather unwell, and in bad walking condition.

In half-an-hour, however, I made a start of it, accompanied by Antoine and Duncan,—the latter carrying my smoothbore, as I thought it likely to be serviceable,—and we went together up a broad valley that branched to the left from that in which our camp was situated. The men had gone in different parties up the surrounding heights ; except Munroe, who had taken his own line, preferring a separate and more distant beat.

It was not long before we observed some sheep,—discovering three of them among the rocks on the opposite side of a deep ravine,—only an old ewe, unluckily, with two yearlings at her side. The ewe and a young ram fell at once to my rifle

* The skin of the male siffleur measures $27\frac{1}{2}$ inches from nose to root of tail (the tail is rather destroyed) ; that of the female 26 inches, and the tail of it $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches to the end of the hair. The skin of another specimen measures—body 23 inches, tail about 8 inches.

shots, and I broke the jaw of the other with the smoothbore ; Antoine then knocked it over dead, making a very fine shot with his old flint rifle,—a most extraordinary little implement, so short and small, so bound up and mended with leather and brass-headed tacks, and altogether so worn and weather-beaten, as to look like some curious antique toy.

After this, I went to stalk a herd we had perceived some little way off, while Antoine remained to watch the ravine. It took me a long round to get to the place I was trying for—an isolated hillock about sixty yards from the sheep,—and when I arrived there I shot badly, being dreadfully out of breath. However, after missing with both barrels, I had still time to load and fire again, the animals being confused, and looking about them instead of attempting to escape, and with these shots I wounded one ewe severely, and mortally wounded the only ram in the herd—a good-sized two-year-old, which, running down the ravine, was met by Antoine, who finished it, and shot another ewe besides.

I ran after the wounded ewe. A lamb was with her ; and, wishing to kill it—as an act of mercy, to save it from starvation—I waited till it was in line with its mother, and struck them both with the same ball. The ewe struggled on some distance, but I overtook and finished her. Antoine now joined me, and we set to to skin and cut up our sheep, much pleased to have obtained so good a supply of fresh meat for the camp. He told me, much to my surprise, that my first sheep of all, after lying a long time apparently dead, had jumped up actively on hearing a shot close by her, and “saved herself” up the steep side of the mountain.

On returning to camp I found that all my people, except Munroe, had come in unsuccessful from the chase : but he presently appeared, bringing with him the head of an old ram

with very good horns. He had also killed another with a still larger head. This was encouraging news, as it showed that herds of fine sheep were in the neighbourhood. The old rams at this season keep in parties by themselves, and one may hunt whole days without finding anything better than bands of ewes and lambs and young males. The head brought in by Munroe was so heavy as to be a fair load for a man.

'Dined off what Toma and Lagrace call "porty-pig" (*porcupie*, porcupine). It was boiled to-night—much better thus than roasted,—tasting like rather fat, delicate mutton.

'Toma is sometimes very facetious in his quiet way. There was an old Indian with the Carlton hunters at Cherry Bush, whom he nicknamed "The Saw-mill," from the incessant jarring drone of his voice as he told endless stories in Cree, and this name had come to be typically applied to any offender of the sort. One of our old hands, lately, was droning away at a long story about some Indian fight, which he suddenly broke off with a sharp sound, in imitation of the "ping" of a closely-passing bullet. Toma softly got up, stepped across the fire to where Matheson was sitting, and, stooping over him, very gravely said—"Saw-mill broke!" Matheson went into fits of laughter, and ran all round the place, telling everybody of Toma's sententious remark.'

September 6th.—Having determined to move the camp to another valley, I made a rough sketch of the opposite mountains as a remembrance of the scene. This finished, I marked my name on a fir-tree, a matter easily accomplished by blazing off part of the bark, and drawing the letters on the exposed surface with the black end of a half-burnt stick. The resin dries soon afterwards, and forms a sort of varnish which preserves the inscription for years.

'The place we are leaving is known as the "Height of

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VIEW FROM CAMP IN MEDICINE TENT VALLEY. (See p. 201.)

Land," being just where the waters divide,—the Athabasca head-stream rising in the snows of a great mountain (which stands towards the left in my sketch), and flowing northwards, while the North River (I have heard no other name for it) flows southwards, to the north branch of the Saskatchewan, from a point not far distant. This country is very little known. The Iroquois, the Assiniboines, and others, hunt as far as the small lake near which we camped on the 2d, but, strangely enough, they do not traverse the few miles farther, which would bring them from where game is scarce and wild, to where it abounds and is easy of approach. Perhaps superstitious reasons may keep them away, as the name "Medicine Tent River" indicates magic and mystery.

'I am the first European who has visited this valley, and if I might have the geographical honour of giving my name to some spot of earth, I should choose the mountain near which the two rivers rise.*

'There seem to be no Indian names in this country for even the most remarkable of its features. This is the less surprising, as the whole district is only inhabited by a few families of wandering hunters, and they are rapidly decreasing in number.

'The mountains seem to be mostly similar in composition to the rock formations near Edinburgh; precipitous walls and rocky summits, resembling those of the Salisbury Crags and Arthur's Seat, being common, while occasionally there are lighter-coloured and lower masses, independent of the others though connected with them, which much remind one of the

* That mountain is perhaps appropriated, being probably visible from the other side; but no one could dispute my claim to the "Height-of-Land" eminence, which I have therefore taken leave to designate on the maps by my own name, as raiser of the cairn that crowns its summit.

Bass Rock. The general colouring of the subordinate hills and valleys is nearly the same as in the Highlands of Scotland, for, although the beautiful heather is not found here, there are grasses and small-leaved plants, which impart a subdued richness like that which the heather preserves after its purple bloom is past. The streams, however, are more lovely than many of the Scottish rivulets, for they are clear, instead of running dark with the black stain of peat-moss.

‘After my name had been marked on the fir-tree, we moved the camp a few miles, passing down into the neighbouring valley of the North River. Antoine and I rode forward together, but stopping for a while at the turn of the hill, we heard the rest of the party approaching, and waited for their arrival. As my men came into view, dashing up at a brisk pace, or galloping here and there to drive in the straggling horses, I was greatly struck with their picturesque appearance ; having, indeed, hardly seen them on the march together since we left Edmonton, for the thick woods and narrow winding tracks keep a large party always in detachments.

—‘All of them carried guns, all, except three, were dressed in fringed leather hunting-shirts,—of every colour, from the yellow of newness, and the white of new-washedness, to the blood-stained brown of extreme antiquity, as displayed in Antoine’s venerable garment. M’Kay, powerful in form and strong of muscle, broad-chested, dark, and heavily bearded, with a wide-brimmed black hat and unfringed buff coat, and bestriding a large brown horse, resembled some Spanish cavalier of old ; while Matheson, mounted on an active little dun pony,—with a blue Saskatchewan cap, gay with bright ribbons, over his long fair hair, and broad belts of scarlet cloth across his chest,—tall, straight, and merry,—was the

image of a gallant young troubadour, riding in smart undress to the tournament.

‘M’Beath, lengthy of stature, dark, moustached and bearded, grave and calm, with a military belt and a rifleman’s sword, looked like an ex-Life Guardsman, half in uniform ; and this martial resemblance was heightened by the red blanket that served as his saddle-cloth, and contrasted richly with the coal-black horse that carried him. Kline, wiry and active, riding Lane—that fine old white mountain-horse, which few but he could capture when loose on the plains,—made a gay and cheerful show ; his broad-brimmed white hat, with its wavy blue-ribbon streamers, perched upon long curly black hair, and shading a clever, well-bearded face ; his chest surmounted by belts of silver and red brocade.

‘Next came Munroe,—tall, strongly yet lightly framed, wearing a short canvas hunting-shirt belted round the waist with leather, and cross-belted with much-embroidered cloth of black ; then Short, formed like a Greek statue, strong and very active, but of no great height, wearing a handsome pouch of leather ornamented with blue and white beads ;—hardy fellows both, of showy dashing air, ready to do aught that might become a man.

‘Duncan, dressed in strong sand-grey shooting-suit and flannel shirt, wearing a stout wide-awake hat, and carrying a double gun in its plain waterproof cover, looked every inch the worthy Scotsman that he is. Near him rode Toma, the brave Iroquois canoe-man, leather-shirted, darkly and simply dressed, slow in the movement of his massive limbs, with swarthy face, and small black eyes, grave in their expression though often twinkling with humour,—a most faithful and excellent fellow.

‘Then Lagrace, that original and amusing old man, in a

purple cotton shirt, tight but very long and wrinkled trousers, a white blanket skull-cap enriched with peak and ears, and decorated with streamers of scarlet cloth, beneath a battered eagle-feather which probably once adorned some Indian horse's tail,—that keen-witted ancient traveller who did everything differently from other men,—led when they drove, woke when they slept, drank cans of strong tea at dead of night, walked out alone and slew queer animals with sticks and stones while all the rest were at their meals,—that quaint old jester who enlivened our halts, after the weariest marches on the dullest days, by all manner of strange devices,—scalp-dances round the kettle lid, Cree war-songs, sudden wrestling matches with Antoine (in which this old aggressor always got the worst), jokes in the most astonishingly broken English,—to whom or what shall he be likened, with his brown parchment skin, his keen aquiline nose, his piercing black eyes, long wild locks, and half-mockingly smiling, small and thin-lipped mouth? I know not—unless Mephistopheles have an American twin-brother!

(To include the spectators—Antoine, stout and round of make, of olive-brown skin and long black hair, was clad in the dusky leather shirt already spoken of, and bore on his arm his curious little rifle, and in his belt an immense hatchet-knife; on his head was a dark-tinted Saskatchewan cap. Though long past his youth, he still had the air of a hardy, active hunter, while his whole aspect truly bespoke him a most kind-hearted, honest, and agreeable man.

‘For myself,—I wore a—now only tolerably clean—cream-coloured hunting-shirt of buffalo skin, fringed on the arms and shoulders; grey trousers fastened under the knee with pieces of green braid; and a thin, white, wide-brimmed Yankee hat, with the high bell-shaped crown pressed in, and

a broad band of green ribbon tied round it ; from my shoulder was slung a telescope ; hanging to my leather belt was a short hunting knife, in a moose-skin sheath plainly embroidered with black and white beads, and beside it a small tobacco-pouch of the same pattern. My charger was the little black Hercules—Jasper, with immense crest and streaming mane and tail. Across the saddle I carried my favourite rifle, in the fringed buff moose-skin cover which I got from the M'Leod River Iroquois.)

'As this gallant party topped the crest of a low hill fair in my view, ribbons streaming, guns swaying, whips flashing, gay colours sparkling in the sun, some approaching at a quick trot, others dashing after vagrant steeds, or urging the heavy-laden pack-horses, who jogged along like elephants with castles on their backs—all life, dash, rattle, and glitter,—they formed so bright a picture, so grandly back-grounded by the stately rocks, so gaily fore-grounded by the crisp green sward, that I could not refrain from attempting to describe it, though the ablest pen or pencil would fail to do justice to the scene.'

—We all halted together, and camped, and in the afternoon Antoine and I went out to the hills. Coming to a rocky ravine, we observed a herd of female sheep on the opposite side, and opened fire on them. The old hunter killed one ewe and two lambs, I killed two of the ewes and wounded another, and afterwards getting a long running chance at the wounded one, I knocked it over also.

After "arranging" the slain (to use Antoine's expression) we proceeded to the highest part of a steep narrow ridge, a spur of the principal range, and looking over the rocky wall that formed its upper edge, saw close by, just upon the other side, a small herd of rams, two of which had remarkably fine

horns. The nearest of these I shot quite dead, the other struggled on severely wounded. Antoine ran after it to finish it off, but his flint-lock missed fire, and, before he was ready again, the fine old ram dropped lifeless, and rolled down the slope of the hill. The horns of this pair were very good indeed, larger even than those brought in by Munroe the day before, but, as usual, somewhat worn and broken at the points.

Returning to our horses, which we had left below, we got home in excellent time. On our arrival, Short reported that he had come close upon a large grisly bear, in the valley below the ridge where I had been shooting the rams. It looked at him, and he at it, but neither cared to begin the fight, so each went his own way. [At the time, Short's behaviour seemed to me rather over-cautious ; with a good double-barrelled gun in his hand, I thought he ought not to have declined the combat. But, on reflection, I believe he acted rightly, having no sufficient inducement for such a hazardous venture. So fierce, strong, active, and tenacious of life is the grisly bear, that even for the best marksman, supported by trustworthy companions, it is the height of imprudence to risk a long shot at him, and a failure at close quarters leaves a solitary hunter small chance indeed of escape.

Talking about grislies, one day, with a good authority on the subject (I forget whom—it might have been James M'Kay), he informed me that if that animal perceives a man in an open plain or glade he will generally advance towards him, and when about a hundred yards distant will rear himself up on his haunches to reconnoitre, after which he will either move away, or continue his advance. In the latter case, he stops again when about thirty yards from the hunter, and again rears himself on end. The hunter, meanwhile, steadily waits, reserving his fire, and the grisly, having

finished his inspection, again advances, until he is ten yards from his opponent, when for the third time he rises in all his gigantic height, prepared to hurl himself forth in the last terrible spring. Now is the hunter's moment: quick as thought his bullet passes into the chest of the bear, sped at that short range with such precision that it carries with it instantaneous death—woe to the hunter if it does not!

In the Rocky Mountains, though probably not north of the Bow River and its head-waters, there exists a savage and treacherous wild beast, more dangerous in some respects than even the grisly himself. This is the puma—or some feline animal closely resembling it in colour and general appearance—which, while nearly as fierce and tenacious of life as the grisly bear, greatly excels him in activity, besides possessing an advantage denied to him—the cat-like power of climbing the highest trees.

But it is not owing to these formidable qualities that the puma is an object of some dread, it is on account of its stealthy habits of nocturnal aggression. Marking out a small party of hunters or travellers, it will follow them secretly for days, and watch by their camp at night, till at last it discovers one of their number resting a little separate from his companions. Then, when all is dark and silent, the insidious puma glides in, and the sleeper knows but a short awakening when its fangs are buried in his throat.

One consolation is left to the survivors—if they kill the eater they may eat him in return; for the puma is considered the most delicately-flavoured animal in the Territories.

These details I gathered from my men, and I see no reason to doubt their truth, for, though such ferocious practices are not, to my knowledge, attributed to the puma of the Atlantic States, the jaguar of South America—a beast of kindred

species—is written of as attacking sleepers in the very manner described. One of my party amused us exceedingly by a story concerning a certain expedition to which he had been lately attached :—how some of the people belonging to it had noticed a puma in a tree, and immediately saluted it with a volley ; but how, instead of securing the victim, they had simultaneously taken to their heels at the moment of drawing trigger, and run so fast and far that they never felt inclined to go back to claim their trophy,—which they most shrewdly suspected might have claimed them, for, while the death of the enemy was doubtful, its indignation, if alive, was not.

Neither in the mountains nor elsewhere did I even catch a glimpse of a puma, or observe its tracks, or any other sign of its existence. At one of the forts, however, I was shown some Blackfoot article—a quiver, or a saddlecloth, I think—which was chiefly composed of the fawn-coloured skin of that animal.]

‘ Fine weather still,—but misty over the distant mountains.’

September 7th.—‘ Slept a little better. It is all very well to talk of custom reconciling to anything, of “hardy hunters,” and the “enervating influences of civilisation,” but, for my part, I find that no custom enables me to sleep as well on the ground as on a good mattress. The more tired I am the worse it is ; I lie awake for hours, every joint aching, half my body too hot, the other half too cold. Then as to food ; alcohol may be “poison,” but I am certain that tea has not equal virtue for restoring a thoroughly tired man,—to draw no parallel between the respective pleasantnesses in taste of a black, bitter fluid, on the one hand, and such delicious drinks as pale ale, sherry, claret, or champagne, on the other. As part proof, I find myself not only very thin, but in bad condition, weak, hardly able to climb the mountains ; yet for

some time there have been no great fatigues to try my constitution, while the open air, and absence of care and business, ought in themselves to have doubled my strength. But, after all, what is strength or weakness if one succeeds in doing what one wishes to do? A great deal as to the pleasure at the time; nothing as to the result.' [These remarks seem inconsistent with others in the journal, where tea is glorified, and the healthiness of tent life extolled,—nevertheless I leave them. Under varying circumstances the thoughts and feelings vary, and it is no true record of travel that displays nothing of the chameleon element in the traveller. Looking back after these many years, I should say, that tea was one of the best of drinks under conditions of ordinary health and labour, but that stimulants are useful in cases of illness or over-fatigue. Also, I think that the system sooner recovers from fatigue or small illnesses amidst civilised comforts than in the rough life of the woods and plains, though the latter is in itself far pleasanter and healthier.

My *mind* had forgotten the toils of the journey through the thick woods, but my *body* had not, and the mountain hunting was telling on me more severely than I imagined.]

'Set off in good time this morning to look for Short's bear, to get more rams with fine heads, and to carry in yesterday's game. Half the people remained in camp, cutting up and drying meat for our consumption on the homeward journey.

The bear was not to be found, though we saw where he had been digging for roots, so I quitted the valley, and ascended the mountains with McKay and Antoine. Passing over the ridge we had climbed the day before, we went as far as the top of the next, and there came suddenly upon a small herd of old rams, having got very close without exciting their suspicions. One of them fell to my first shot, but I missed with the second barrel. As they ran

down the declivity of the hill Antoine made a long and fine shot, and killed a ram with very handsome large horns, more twisted than usual, and entirely perfect in their points. My sheep was an older one, with horns a good deal worn; he was exceedingly fat, looking when skinned like a well-fed English wether of the highest quality.

'These beautiful mountain sheep are about the size of a large fallow buck, but lighter in the haunch, deeper in the chest, longer in the leg, and altogether larger in the bone. Except in the shape of the horns, their head is like that of the common goat; the eye large, round and full, with a very large pupil, leaving only a narrow rim of pale yellow iris. The hair is coarse and of a brown grey, except on the haunch and the inside of the legs and stomach, which are white. Some are much darker than others, apparently irrespective of age, though those under two or three years old are invariably light-coloured.

'The females are smaller than the males, and have little goat-like horns, instead of the great curled horns of the rams, which on the American side of the border have given to the whole race the name of "the Big-horn." At this season the rams are in their best condition, very fat and but slightly rank; in October they begin to become uneatable, as is the case with the red-deer stag in Scotland.*

An admiring contemplation of the beautiful horns carried by Antoine's sheep made me anxious to get some other specimens to match them; so, while the "arranging" proceeded, I set off by myself, and took a pretty long climb after a small band that had just then appeared at no great distance from us. Whisky, who insisted on following me, came very much

* *Ovis Montana. Rocky Mountain Sheep. Argali*—Cook, Godman. *Ovis Annon Pygærgus*—Griffith. *Big-horn*—Lewis and Clarke. *Cul-blanc, et Grosse-corne*—Canadian Voyageurs. *My-at-hk*—Cree Indians. *Ema-keekurnow*—Blackfeet, etc. RICHARDSON, — *Faun. Bor.-Am.*, vol. i. p. 271.

in the way, either running forward, or lagging behind and squeaking loudly if I made any threatening movement; notwithstanding this difficulty I got tolerably near them, but missed the two running chances they offered. By making a stalk, however, I got right above the sheep, who had betaken themselves to a very deep grassy hollow among the cliffs, and knocked one over at upwards of 180 yards, firing at four that stood close together. His head, though respectable, was not particularly large or good.

'Opening my telescope rather quickly to look at the slain, before descending to where he lay, Whisky uttered a squeak that might have been heard a mile off, and took to his heels, evidently thinking I had got some whip of a new and dangerous pattern. I never struck the poor creature nor spoke harshly to him in my life, but these Indian dogs are so fearfully beaten and ill-treated at home that they almost breathe in yells and squeaks. I have often seen children, four or five years old, take up the largest stick or stone they could lift, and dash it down on the wretched body of some unoffending dog—though it must be confessed, that at the forts or large camps the dogs are such a nuisance, so troublesome, dirty, and noisy, that no one can resist hurling an occasional stone at them.'

Having rejoined my companions, we set out together to stalk a great herd of rams which had just come into view: they were scattered about, feeding, or lying in groups, on the steep declivity of a hill at the end of the ridge we saw them from. We quickly gained the top of the hill, scrambled through some difficult rocks without alarming or disturbing the sheep, and got within range.

Seeing a good chance, I fired a couple of shots at a pair of splendid rams that were feeding about not far beneath us. One fell dying, the other walked away, blood dripping from

his nose. M'Kay fired immediately afterwards, and killed a very fine ram; then we rushed different ways among the rocks, in chase of the rest of the herd.

I began by firing two ineffectual shots at some rams moving along the face of the precipice far below; then observing the sheep I had wounded at my second shot, I fired at him again, but without perceptible result. As he was much too far off, I attempted to go down to him, and suddenly found myself in a very dangerous place, where a wide and steeply-descending trench-like hollow, between two firm hard riiges, was filled up and hidden by an accumulation of pebbles and small fragments of rock. Wherever I stepped, the stones and shingle gave way in masses, carrying me along with them as they went sliding on their downward course, hurrying towards depths I tried not to think about; and, to add to my trouble, Whisky appeared just above me—whining with fright, and struggling desperately to keep his footing on the treacherous surface,—and sent the stones in showers past my head. I hardly expected ever to get to the top,—to descend or stand still would have been death,—but with great care and exertion, using my rifle as a support by laying it flat on any firmer ledges, and leaning on it as I dragged myself upwards, I at length reached solid ground,—feeling very grateful to a kind Providence for bringing me safely through.

Neither M'Kay nor Antoine were in sight, though I heard some shots quite distinctly, so I returned to where the rams we had first killed were lying. No one appearing, I determined to walk homewards, and make another effort, by the way, to get the wounded ram I had already so nearly broken my neck in following. I took care, however, to choose a different road, and, after some climbing, at length found myself close to the object of my search. He was standing by

the edge of a cliff about thirty feet high. I was exactly beneath him, on a narrow and sloping grass-covered shelf of rock, which overhung a tremendous precipice that dropped sheer to the very base of the mountain itself.

I stepped back as far as I could, and fired at his heart; it was a miss apparently, for he only moved higher up; then he turned and came to his former position, and looked at me over the verge of the height. I instantly gave him the second barrel: the ball struck home: he made one spring off the cliff into empty air, and came crashing down on the turf at my feet,—nearly falling on poor Whisky, who must have entered this day in his journal as one of horrors. The ram lay kicking in the agonies of death, and was on the very point of rolling off the platform, but I got hold of his hind leg, and held on till he expired, and then propped his body firmly up with stones.

At that moment I heard Antoine calling close by; he presently descended, and joined me on the narrow platform. His news was soon told:—M'Kay had shot several more of the rams; he himself had been unsuccessfully following a wounded one ever since we separated.

It was beginning to get dark, so we hastened to re-ascend the precipices, then we went back to the safer ground, where some of the first killed sheep were lying just as they had fallen. As it was so late, Antoine only gralloched and partly skinned them,—placing something near each of them to drive away the crows,—instead of “arranging” them in the usual manner.

‘When time permits, the hunter’s full “arrangement” is as follows:—He begins by skinning the sheep, then takes off the head, and removes the paunch and offal as far as the heart; next he cuts off the legs and shoulders and back. The chest, with the neck attached, now remains (a strange-looking

object, which would scare a respectable iarder into fits), and this he proceeds to lay beside the other joints, placing there also such internal parts as are considered good. Over the whole he then draws the skin, and having planted a stick in the ground close by, with a handkerchief or some such thing fastened to it, the operation of arranging is complete, and the animal is ready for conveyance home when the horses arrive.

‘Antoine goes through the whole process with a large and very heavy knife, like a narrow and pointed cleaver, which is also used for cutting wood and performing all the offices of a hatchet, but unwieldy as it is, a practised hand can skin the smallest and most delicate creatures with it, as easily as with a pocket-knife.’ [I have seen Antoine skin a ground-squirrel with this ponderous weapon,—yet it got no sharpening, except an occasional rub on some smooth stone picked up almost at random from the bed of the nearest river.]

On reaching the top of the ridge we met M’Kay, then all scrambled down in the dark, and, what we hardly expected, found the horses just where we had left them in the morning. M’Gillis had been tied, as we had less confidence in his steadiness, but though Jasper and the old mare were free and unhobbled, they had not wandered a hundred yards from the place.

‘We had a tedious and rather difficult ride home, illuminated by flashes of lightning in every direction, though but feebly enlightened by the moon, new risen above the mountain ridges. At length the camp fire shone cheerily before us, and we got in just in time to finish supper before a tremendous storm of wind and rain came sweeping down the valley from the north.’

September 8th.—‘A slight sprinkling of snow on the ground. Some of the men went with horses and brought in the sheep killed yesterday, while others continued drying our store of meat over a slow fire.

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HEAD OF A ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAM. (See p. 215.)

THE PROPERTY OF
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'There were now eight very fine heads in camp, from which I selected the following to take home :—1. That of the ram that leaped off the rock. This was far the finest. I marked it 7, on the left horn,—for the day of the month on which I got it. 2. One shot by M'Kay from the top of the hill, when we came on the great herd, marked M'K. VII. 3. One shot by myself at the same place, marked VII. 4. The fine one Antoine killed at a long running shot, marked A. VII. 5. One of those I shot on the 6th, marked VI. 6. The one brought into camp by Munroe on the 5th, marked M. V. These are all remarkably good heads.

[The dimensions of the heads in inches are as follows :—

Length following curve.	Circumference at root of horn.	Distance from point to point.
No. 1. $38\frac{1}{2}$	15	$21\frac{1}{2}$
2. 33	$14\frac{1}{2}$	17
3. $32\frac{1}{4}$	14	16
4. $34\frac{1}{2}$	14	$19\frac{1}{2}$
5. $32\frac{1}{2}$	$14\frac{1}{2}$	16
6. 33	14	—

The length of No. 1, it will be observed, is not less than $38\frac{1}{2}$ inches, the circumference at the base 15 inches. This is an immensely large head. Captain Palliser speaks as follows of the horns of the Mountain Ram :—"I have measured some that curved more than usual, as much as 32 inches in length, the hollow part is capable of containing two quarts of water, and is 23 [? 13] inches in circumference at the orifice." (*Solitary Rambles of a Hunter in the Prairies*, 1853, p. 219.) Sir John Richardson, in his description of the animal, states the length of the horn of a specimen in the British Museum to be 34 inches, circumference at base 13 inches, distance from tip of one horn to tip of other, 27 [? 17] inches. (*Faun. Bor.-Am.* vol. i. p. 274.) Mr. Kane, however, mentions a head seen by him when at Jasper's house in 1847, exceeding that

of my ram—"I made a sketch of a ram's head of an enormous size; his horns . . . measured 42 inches in length." (*Wanderings of an Artist among the Indians*, 1859, p. 345.) This must have been a very exceptional animal, mine being so greatly the best head out of six chosen from those of more than a dozen old rams, shot in a district long free from disturbance, where the finest sheep were likely to be congregated.]

All these heads reached Scotland safely, except No. 6, of which I have only a single horn, the rest of it having been torn from the pack-saddle during our marches through the rough fir-woods. I also brought home a number of the best skins, which had been carefully marked at the same time with the heads.

[I did not look back on the previous day's shooting with unmingled pleasure. There was too much slaughter, and conscience rather reproached me, prompting various reflections, which found place at some length in my journal; the page, however, is altogether obliterated, except these few expressions at the end:—"Yesterday's shooting was successful enough, especially as regards my chief object—fine heads; and a man who travels thousands of miles for such trophies may be excused for taking part in one day's rather reckless slaughter. After all, there were not more than twelve killed, and a few wounded, out of a very large herd, which perhaps may never again be alarmed by the sight of man." I might have added, that all the meat was required for use, so that nothing was wasted but two or three of the more distant carcasses.

Still there is something repugnant to the feelings in carrying death and anguish on so large a scale amongst beautiful inoffensive animals. One thinks little—too little—of the killing of small game, but in shooting large game the butchery of the act comes more home, one sees with such vividness the

wounds, and the fear, and the suffering. But it does not do to look at things too narrowly,—one grows morbid,—and no thinking will ever bring one to the root of the matter.

Nevertheless, I would that those foolish boys who pride themselves on making long shots, and pour their pellets so freely, in these days of rapid loading, into the bodies of birds and beasts out of all reasonable range—I would that they might be persuaded to serious reflection, in regard to the pain and lingering misery they so needlessly inflict on God's harmless creatures.]

The mist, which had been gathering all day, broke into a regular snow-storm as the evening came on, but not before the men had packed a great deal of dried meat, besides shoeing several of the horses. In ground of this rocky nature the fore-feet of the horses require to be shod, to preserve them from breaking; in the plains, it is their hind-feet that need shoes, because the hoofs, worn and polished by the crisp grasses, slip about as if on ice, unless furnished with some iron hold-fast.

September 9th.—‘The snow-storm has lasted all night, and all day, though now towards evening it is lessening. The mountains are blotted out in mist, the hills are white, except where dark rocks project through the surface, and the ground is covered many inches deep with snow.

‘The men seem happy in their large tent, singing jolly songs; and I am not uncomfortable in mine, warmly clothed, a great fire of pine-logs blazing before me, and Shakespeare dividing the time with great meals of mountain mutton, followed by pipes of that excellent tobacco which the Company so benignantly supplies.

‘And yet—“surgit amari aliquid”—though the body may be at ease, the mind will feel restless and bereave its quieter companion of comfort.

‘To be storm-staid for an indefinitely long time in the heart of the Rocky Mountains, with winter stealing on apace, and a long and difficult journey before one, is not an encouraging prospect. Nor, disguise it as one may, is it very enlivening to sit, with wet feet, under a thin canvas covering that does not quite exclude the keen north wind. Then the day is endurable, but those weary nights—now, alas, those *long* nights—that is the time of woe.

‘Nevertheless, it is better to be cold and aching under a tent in the wilderness, than to be feverish and nervous in a warm house at home. All is for the best. Nothing is ruinously bad for a man but that enervate wallowing in luxury and feeble indolence, which in this world does more evil to his own being than high-handed resolute sin; and may likewise do so in the next world, for aught we know,—for where there is strength there is always hope of its being turned to good account, while from nothingness nothing can be made. . . .

‘Finished “Titus Andronicus,” a most disagreeable play, only redeemed by a few fine passages, such as,—“Sweet mercy is nobility’s true badge;” Titus’s short speech,—“The hunt is up,” and Tamora’s melodious invitation to Aaron. The play bears traces of much mind-cudgeling: the poet must have been very young when he wrote it.* How inferior the commonplace fiend Aaron, to that splendid villain Iago! One a mere vulgar monster, the other just such a plausible demon as any very subtle-minded man might tremble to think he himself might become, if bereft of God’s aid and exposed to strong temptation.

‘It is remarkable that Shakespeare often puts very noble sentiments into the mouths of the most evil characters,—as Tamora in the lines—“Sweet mercy;” and Iago, constantly,

* Most of this play is certainly not by Shakespeare.

—perhaps to bring them closer to the standard of ordinary humanity, and to show that they had once known the right though now they did the wrong, that they had passed into guilt through paths of self-deception and conscience-hardening, not rushed inevitably into it through the resistless force of destiny or the sudden coercion of some higher power.'

September 10th.—The morning broke clear and fine, and the powerful sun soon melted the snow in the lower regions. Taking M'Kay and Antoine, I rode down the valley in search of the grisly bear; but could see nothing of him, though we went a long way exploring the woods and back-lying glens. As the case was evidently hopeless, I left my men, who seemed anxious to explore the track we were likely to follow on moving camp next day, and set out alone for the top of one of the ridges that led up to the highest part of the grand range itself, thinking I might thus gain the summit of some peak, and discover what lay beyond the valley that had hitherto bounded our view.

I had a long and hard climb to begin with, and then a succession of difficult climbs over the numerous rocky walls that obstructed me as I slowly made my way along the ridge. There was still a good deal of snow on the high ground, although gradually melting, and this proved helpful in many places, as it was firm enough to give a foothold where the stones were loose and unsteady. At length I got close to the foot of the great principal cliff at the top of the mountain; but there found myself stopped by a small but excessively steep and difficult rock, which stood right in the path, where the sharply-cut ridge was at its narrowest, flanked also on either side by a tremendous precipice coated with layers of sheet ice. Twice I tried this rocky barricade, but it was quite impassable, unless by scrambling round it, where, though less steep, it partly overhung the precipice; but even there it was very difficult, and

a fall involved certain death. Besides, a still worse place awaited me farther on ; so I reluctantly yielded to necessity, and turned away—owning myself vanquished, for, except a single peak, I had seen nothing on the farther side of the valley's barrier.

When a long way on the downward course,—which, contrary to one's usual experience among rocks, was easier than the ascent,—I discovered that I had left my rifle behind, having laid it at the foot of a steep little crag, where both hands were required, and this having happened near the top, it cost me half my work again to repair the unlucky forgetfulness.

‘Owing to this delay, night overtook me before I had even reached the pine-woods in the valley that lay between me and the camp, and in consequence I had one of the most disagreeable walks imaginable. The distance must have been four or five miles, and mostly uphill ; there were rocks to descend and streams to cross ; the woods were much obstructed with fallen timber and deep rough water-courses, and the opener spaces were filled with thick brush. There was no path, and though the moon had risen, the spruces cast such a shade as to cause almost total darkness ; added to this I was very tired, for the day had been hot and my toils severe ; besides, at every moment I expected to stumble upon the grisly bear, whose very domain I was traversing, and against whom I should have had no chance, as the light was not sufficient for shooting.

‘Several times I fired off my rifle, in reply to shots from the camp intended for my guidance, but the echoes made these exchanges of signals useless, and it was not till within a mile of home that M'Kay and Munroe met me with horses, having at last discovered my direction. Most heartily glad was I to find myself on the back of a horse—no easy-chair is so good a rest for a man tired out with walking,—and this

short ride, and an excellent supper, with plenty of tea, completely refreshed me and put all to rights.

'I have gained little by my hard climb, except making out perfectly the run of the valleys in which we are. There are two main valleys,—that which we left on the 6th, and that in which is our present camp; the former running N.W., the other S.E.; the Medicine Tent River, an Athabasca head-water, running down the first, the North River, a Saskatchewan head-water, going down the second; the hill on which we placed the monument standing exactly at the central point where the two descents divide.

'All the mountains appear to be most precipitous on their eastern and northern sides, the greater number looking as if strong west winds had bent their peaks, giving them a set like trees exposed to the force of a prevalent gale.

'The rocks over which I climbed to-day, when going along the ridge, were nearly all different in material, some being broken in sharp edges, others ragged like coarse white coral, others formed of thin layers of a black, slaty-looking stone, which crumbled in the hand. I came upon a large tract of this last kind in descending one of the slopes, and found, mixed up with the broken shingle, heavy round stones varying in size from a 28 lb shot to a billiard ball; some of them whole and lying half buried, but most of them broken, and showing themselves to be composed of thin layers of black stone, enclosing a yellowish substance—orange towards the centre—like some sort of ore. I also found many broken Encrinites.

'The country through which the North River passes after leaving this height-of-land valley, appears to be another valley, so large and wide that it would be called a plain were it not entirely covered with dense pine-wood.'

CHAPTER XIV.

NORTH RIVER CAMP TO KOOTANIE PLAIN.

SUNDAY, September 11th.—‘This being a very fine warm day we moved our camp, and, after making a short march, halted on the North River, opposite to a magnificent rock, resembling the bastion of some giant’s castle. Two slopes proceeding from the debris at its foot were covered with small pines, those on the one flourishing and erect, those on the other mostly beaten down and broken: the whole scene suggested an assault on a fortress, up a practicable breach,—troops advancing steadily and in good order to the attack, and troops hurled backwards in ruin and confusion.’*

As we passed the foot of a glen, down which a little stream pursued its way, we observed an immense flight of “Painted Lady” butterflies;† they were hovering about in hundreds, or settling on the young firs that grew on the sandy ground in a sheltered sunny spot, their gay wings making a pretty contrast with the dark green colour of the trees. We noticed the tracks of a bear near the same place. Not

* To this grand rocky mass I have given the name of *Mount Dalhousie*, in memory of a much lamented friend—the 11th Earl of that title (more extensively known as Lord Panmure),—at whose house my journey to America was first suggested.

† Having but little knowledge of entomology, I cannot be certain if these butterflies were the “*Cynthia Cardui*,” or another variety of somewhat similar appearance. I am inclined to think they were the “*Cynthia Huntera*”—*Belle Dame de l’Amérique*. RICHARDSON,—*Faun. Bor.-Am.*, vol. iii. pp. xi., and 295. MORRIS,—*British Butterflies*, p. 76, third edition.

far off there was a larger brook, also running into the river, which had the peculiarity of tinting all the stones in its bed with a deep crimson stain. I picked up two of them as specimens; they have much lost colour in course of years.

September 12th.—Before we started I began a sketch of the grand rock opposite our camp, but the heat of the sun was so intolerable that I had to content myself with little more than a mere outline. We continued our march down the North River. The rocks were very fine; all of the same massive square-cut character. At dinner-time we halted near a small shallow lake. A large bird of the crow species rising suddenly off the shore, I tried my rifle at it, and knocked some feathers from its wing as it flew away. These birds, which were numerous in the district, had a very tuneful note,—not unlike distant melodious pipings on a reed.*

We now left the branch of the river we had been hitherto following, and took our course up one of its two more southern branches, choosing that which lay most to the middle, and after a long hard struggle through a stretch of burnt and fallen timber of the worst description, we camped on a sandy flat close beside the stream.

The scenery had become exceedingly grand and beautiful. The valley was a mile in width; to the east and west sheer precipices, 3000 feet high, confined it on either hand with a majestic barrier.—‘That on the eastern side is of a most remarkable shape, resembling an immense square block of masonry, placed on the summit of a vast mound with gradual slopes, like an altar raised by giants of old to some of the extinct gods.

* This variety does not seem to be mentioned in Sir John Richardson's work, as the only similar bird described there,—*Corvus Corone*—*The Crow*,—*Haw-haw-sew*, of the Cree Indians,—is not stated to be a piping crow.—*Fenn. Bor.-Am.*, vol. ii. p. 291.

'It was very fine to behold the moon rising from behind this enormous mass, which remained in absolute blackness, while all things else were touched with silver light. Just before she emerged, a large, soft-looking meteor fell from the sky directly above us, and slowly floated away towards the south.

'The moon was full, and encircled by a ring of orange and yellow ; she floated in the midst of innumerable small fleecy clouds, which wandered across a sky of the intensest blue. This cloud-formed prevalence of mottled grey covered the southern heaven, and ended in an arch, exact as the rainbow, passing through Corona Borealis and just enclosing Cygnus and Pegasus. Beyond this line, to the north, the clouds were dark, and only perceptible from the absence of the stars they obscured. As night advanced the region of white cloud grew less, and horizontal streaks of light, like the Aurora, appeared beneath the polar star.'

September 13th.—We crossed the river and for a short time ascended its course, then marched back the way we came, as Antoine fancied we should not be able to find an outlet at the end of the valley. When we had gone a long way down stream, it appeared that he was quite ignorant of this part of the country, and had no better reason for doubting our former track, than the discovery of certain marks on the trees, which seemed to denote that Indians had recently preceded us, and then turned back.

[There was a sudden halt ; Antoine, Munroe, and M'Kay began to hold a council, and showed signs of doubt as to the proper road. It displeased me to find that our long counter-march was likely to prove fruitless, especially as everything that day had been done without reference to my opinion. Rightly or wrongly, I suspected an intention to leave the

mountains by the easiest and plainest road, instead of exploring the finer and less-traversed routes, according to my frequently expressed desire. Perhaps there was no such deliberate intention, but various circumstances had lately indicated that influences opposed to my own were at work, particularly the constant discussions going on in Cree, of which, from knowing a few words here and there, I often guessed the purport.]

'I was very angry—things having been done without consulting me—so instantly turned my horse, and rode back alone through the woods, till I came to the place where we had crossed the river. As there was no proper track, I had some difficulty in finding the way, but got to my point all right, and after a while the rest came up.'

[About this time I discovered, in conversation with M'Kay, that Munroe felt aggrieved, thinking that I had slighted him in the office of guide—which he then considered himself to be filling, though I had not so supposed it,—by once or twice refusing to camp at places designated by him for that purpose.

I pointed out to M'Kay, that though in ordinary cases the guide was the proper person to settle camp arrangements, my sport and pleasure were the objects of the present journey, and that while fully believing in Munroe's competency to choose the best camping-places, I sometimes preferred inferior sites, on account of the beauty of the scenery. M'Kay, who had been inclined to sympathise with his fellow-guide, at once understood me, and doubtless satisfied Munroe, for cordiality seemed quite restored.]

'After dinner we continued our march, and a weary one it was. The river was so flooded that we were obliged to keep a high line, over a succession of steep ridges with deep

hollows between, the whole of which were covered with burnt and fallen pines lying about in the most obstructive manner. Nothing can exceed the discomfort of passing over such a country, especially when the ground is soft and miry.

'The larger lying-pines tear and wound the horses, and keep them perpetually jumping, for the obstacles are too great to be stepped over ; the smaller ones meet you like chevaux-de-frises placed at every angle, some pointing towards your face, others at your legs or your horse's stomach ; and, being dry, hard, and sharp, they pierce like spears when met directly, or tear your knees and hands if you merely rub against them.

'Nothing but leather is a defence. I often felt as if in one of the tournaments of old, as these lances of the forest splintered against my buff jerkin and nearly drove me out of the saddle, or, artistically aimed at the head, lifted my "beaver" off, sometimes well-nigh treating me to Absalom's fate.'

'Yesterday "Mission Cendré," the large roan horse I bought from the missionaries at St. Ann, one of my best, got a severe stab under the thigh, and was hardly able to go on, and to-day one of the Edmonton horses came to his end in a very singular manner. At dinner time we observed him to be looking dull and not feeding, but there seemed so little the matter that when we started Lagrace rode him as usual. He went fairly enough till beginning to climb a steep hill, when he showed signs of sluggishness, as we thought it, and his rider urged him on ; suddenly he stopped, sank down, and lay to all appearance lifeless. In a little while he raised his head and gazed around with a perplexed and anxious air, then uttered three piercing neighs, the strangest I ever heard, turned heavily on his side, and died. M'Kay attempted

to bleed him, but no blood would flow, and the death-glaze came over his eyeballs. On opening him we found his lungs diseased and his kidneys inflamed; his blood was very thin, except about the heart, where it was thick and clotted. The other horses seemed scared; many of them would not pass near the dead body.

'After another hour's struggling we halted, and camped on an island of the North River, not having made more than three miles' progress on this unlucky day.

'Lightning was flashing in the heavens at nightfall, and dense clouds floated over all the sky; we prepared for a storm, but there only came a slight shower.'

September 14th.—Our start was delayed by a long search for two of the horses, which, being at last found, we pursued our way S.S.W. up the North River, and rode forward at a pretty good pace, though some parts of the track were full of obstructions. 'Late in the evening, while preparing to camp, we saw some white goats high up among the cliffs. (They are true goats, though often spoken of as sheep, and seem to frequent steeper precipices than the grey sheep.)

'Late as it was, Antoine and I went after them, and climbed some places I should not have liked to venture on alone, though a tolerably practised climber in my own country. Night came on as we reached the top of the ridge; the goats had moved out of sight; and nothing was left but to make our way down the valley,—and hard work it was. There was just light enough to see a few yards in front, but not sufficient to discover where the descent was safe, except by actual experiment. We crept carefully along the face of the cliff, sometimes staggering in loose shingle, sometimes finding our footing as best we could in the steeper places.

'Several times we fancied we had hit on a good way to get

down, but it always ended in what Antoine called "un rocher coupé"—otherwise, a precipice. Even he began to think we should have to pass the night there (like flies on a wall)—I had for long been expecting nothing better—but Providence directed us at last to a gentler slope, by which we descended in safety to the valley level, reaching camp barely in time to shelter from a heavy fall of rain. Melancholy and depressed, —from fatigue I suppose, and from having been so long in fear for my life while among the cliffs in the darkness.'

September 15th.—'Bitterly cold night, rain till near dawn ; then hard frost, tents and oil-cloths sheeted with ice. The sun takes very long to rise in these deep valleys, being obstructed by the mountains, which stand like walls on either side. Till he shows himself there is a vault-like chill in the air, but as soon as his rays surmount the barrier the heat becomes oppressive.

'We continued our march up the valley, along a beautiful level track by the river-side, but, as afterwards appeared, we ought to have turned to the left up a creek which was hardly noticed at the time, none of the men knowing this part of the country. Lagrace had a general idea of the road, but he found himself at fault when we suddenly came to a mountain which stood right across our path, apparently forbidding farther progress, for it was no better than a chaos of rocks and great broken stones, past which the stream, now very small, rushed by in a deep and impassable channel.

'Leaving the rest to wait his return, Lagrace scrambled up the mountain to search for a pass, while, with the same object, I set out in another direction, followed by Whisky,—who has a mania for climbing, though he squeaks on coming to the difficult places ;—and, taking my rifle with me, I was rewarded for a very hard walk by shooting a ptarmigan—or at

least a bird exactly like one. There was a covey of them seated on the bare top of a rocky hill, and when disturbed they flew round the knob and alighted at a short distance. I missed my second shot,—which at dinner next day I rather lamented, recognising a true grouse flavour in the bird, which made it very superior to the tasteless “partridge,” of the pine-forests.*

‘On returning, I found that M’Kay had got all the horses to the top of the hill by a path that seemed quite impracticable, for it was not only exceedingly steep, but composed of very sharp many-cornered blocks, much the size of a cart, lying at different levels,—near one another, but sufficiently apart to leave great deep holes between, where knife-like smaller stones did not fill the openings.

‘At the summit was a nearly perpendicular wall of hard frozen snow, about twenty feet high. Steps were cut, and the horses dragged up with ropes. They ascended without accident, except Blond, who slipped on a sheet of ice just as he got to the top, and fell to the bottom, crushing our pots and kettles, but damaging himself very little, as his packs saved him. Rowland positively refused to go up, so he was taken a long way round, and the men carried his packs up the icy stair.’ [I did not see the horses taken up, but was at the place immediately afterwards, while they were still there. It was an almost incredible feat, though perhaps less really wonderful than the previous ascent of the hill among the separated blocks of stone.]

‘We now saw before us a flat gravel-covered valley entirely

* Tetrao (Lagopus) Mutus. *The Ptarmigan*. RICHARDSON,—*Faun. Bor.-Am.*, vol. ii. p. 350. In the same work, Sir John speaks of the extreme rarity of specimens, stating that he never himself met with this variety in the fur-countries. As far as a non-scientific observer may judge, I am certain that the bird shot by me was identical with the Scotch ptarmigan.

enclosed by mountains, the sides of those farthest off bearing great masses of snow, among which the river took its rise, flowing onwards in several shallow channels. Near the snow on our left (that is, towards the eastern side) appeared a lower ridge, and this was our only hope, for unless fortunate enough to pass over it and arrive at some other valley, we had no choice but to go back, losing several days and all the heavy toil of men and horses.

'The ridge, though steep, was in time ascended, and to our great joy there was a practicable road down a watercourse on the other side; but we long remained in suspense, being only able to see our way step by step, and always dreading that "un rocher coupé" might blight our prospects. No difficulties, however, existed, and by evening we found ourselves comfortably encamped at the side of a mountain stream which evidently flowed towards the Saskatchewan, the direction in which we had intended to travel.

'There were several very old remains of an Indian encampment where we halted, but I doubt if any human being ever came to the place by our road; certainly no white man ever did.

'Going along the valley I shot three siffleurs, but two of them rolled into their holes and could not be recovered. We saw and heard numbers of the little marmots peculiar to these mountains. They are of the size of a rat and the shape of a guinea-pig, their colour is grey-green, their cry a complaining whine.*

* This variety I believe to be exceedingly rare out of its own limited district. I am inclined to identify it with a peculiar little animal described by Sir John Richardson—*Lepus* (*Lagomys*) *Princeps*,—*The Little-Chief Hare: Buckathree Kah-yawwee*—Indians. Length of head and body 6 inches 9 lines. "On the approach of a man, it utters a feeble cry, like the squeak of a rabbit when hurt." RICHARDSON,—*Faun. Bor.-Am.*, vol. i. p. 227.

[I was afterwards given at one of the Forts (I regret to have forgotten which) an Indian robe composed of the skins of a small animal of the marmot species. The robe measures 80 inches by 69, and contains 105 complete skins, besides twenty, which have been more or less cut to fill interstices in the pattern,—125 distinct pieces in all.

The largest skins are 10 inches long, though a little shortened in squaring them into convenient shape, so that, adding 3 inches for the head, the animal would seem to have been about 13 inches in length, exclusive of the tail. The tails measure about 4 inches, and hang loose upon the surface, combining with small strips of skin along the various seams to form a succession of curious ornamental fringes.

The skins vary in colour from brown to silver-grey along the back, which is mottled all over with little whitish spots. The stomach and lower parts are of a yellowish grey, sometimes almost approaching to pale orange. In size and colouring the animal appears to correspond with an inhabitant of the northern part of the fur-countries—"Aretomys (Spermophilus) Parryi.—*Parry's Marmot*. *Seck-seck*—Esquimaux. *Thæ-thiny* (Rock-badger)—Chipewyans." RICHARDSON,—*Faun. Bor.-Am.*, vol. i. p. 158.]

September 16th.—The horses were very much fatigued with yesterday's work, for, besides their toil, they had had nothing to eat till evening, so we settled to give them half a day to rest and recruit.

Availing myself of the interval, I went out with Antoine to look for sheep. We almost immediately saw some fine old rams, but they discovered us, and made their escape to the opposite mountain, stringing up a vast and nearly perpendicular wall of glittering rock, along invisible paths where no human foot could follow. Soon afterwards, observing six

ewes on the top of a detached crag, we climbed round the face of it till we got within shot, and were fortunate enough to kill all but one of the number—three falling to my rifle and two to Antoine's,—which furnished us with a welcome supply of fresh meat, for there was not a fortnight's dry provision in camp.

One of the sheep was struck by my shot while running from us in a direct line ; on receiving the bullet she threw her hind-legs straight into the air, and danced for half-a-minute on her forelegs, in what seemed a scarcely possible attitude.

'The men were busy to-day in mending their moccasins. These soft shoes [leather socks one might call them] are very comfortable in dry, hot weather, but moisture soaks through them in an instant, and, though they do admirably for level ground, I find them slippery on the hill, and no protection against stones and thorns. When the weather is cold they are bad wear for horseback, as one's feet get chilled in the stirrups. But for a pair of nailed shooting-boots, I could not have got along at all in the mountains, which are more covered with sharp stones than any ground I have seen in Scotland. Even my men, accustomed to nothing but moccasins, are constantly bruising and cutting their feet ; they sometimes wear out a new pair of soles in a few hours.

'The best moccasins are made of moose leather : red-deer (*wapiti*) is very soft, but too thin ; buffalo is exceedingly poor both in look and quality. They are generally made in three pieces ; one forming the slipper that encloses the foot ; another covering the instep, running upwards in a tongue over the front of the ankle, and finished in a semi-oval at the lower end ; the third wrapping round the ankle, concealing the upper part of the second piece, and tied sandal-fashion

with a strip of thin leather passed through eyelets round the heel. The part that comes over the instep is usually covered with red, blue, or white cloth, and ornamented with embroidery in beads or dyed horse-hair. In Red River this part is made much larger, and lower over the foot, than in Saskatchewan; generally, also, the toe is less pointed, and the ankle-covering less high.

'The embroidering of men's moccasins with flower patterns is not to be commended, it has a tawdry, effeminate appearance; but, indeed, I have seldom seen any bead-embroidery of good taste, except among the pure Indians, who, for such work, prefer geometrical devices to imitations of natural objects.

'It is singular how invariably the art-instinct of the primitive savage guides him to that correct judgment which civilised nations only attain (if they do attain it) after centuries of thought and experiment,—as youth loses the grace of childhood without for many years acquiring the stately comeliness of maturity. So in religion, also, the child instinctively knows those truths, which, lost amidst a lifetime of reasonings and controversy, old age sometimes regains;—as in the case of John Wesley, who after trying Ritualism, Mysticism, and Moravianism, and devising a new system of his own, during all which processes he strenuously battled against those who did not accept his most recently adopted creed, yet in his old age saw the vanity and vexation of such janglings, and thus expressed himself:—"I am sick of opinions—my soul loathes this frothy food." [The whole passage runs thus:—"I am sick of opinions: I am weary to bear them: my soul loathes this frothy food. Give me solid and substantial religion: give me an humble lover of God and man; a man full of mercy and good faith . . . laying

himself out in the work of faith, the patience of hope, the labour of love. Let my soul be with these Christians, where-soever they are, and of whatsoever opinion they are of."—SOUTHEY,—*Life of Wesley*, vol. ii. p. 94. 3d edition.]

'Is Europe beginning to draw near this ripening of judgment? There are some signs of it. Were Christ to come again, would he not, as once before, take a little child and set him in our midst?'

September 17th.—The night was cruelly cold: it was almost impossible to sleep. Breakfasting early, we made our way down a wild and rugged glen, along which we toiled till evening without rest or food, confined mostly to the bed of a torrent so stony as to hurt the horses' feet: our direction tended always to the south-east. At length we arrived at the valley's end, where the water escaped through a long, narrow, deep gorge of rock, then crossed the shoulder of a mountain covered with lying-wood, and finally camped near the Saskatchewan, half-a-day from Kootanie Plain.*

—'The valley we have left is enclosed on the east by a precipitous wall of mountains of a pearly grey colour, composed of a hard stone lying in layers, like slates cut diamond shape and placed flat side outwards, so that the cliff is scored with parallel jagged lines. The length of this mountain barrier seems to be about ten miles, its height perhaps two thousand feet [above the stream]; in many places it is nearly perpendicular, and the summit forms a continuous serrated line.

'Saw traces of bears all along, but the beasts keep themselves out of sight. The wind was excessively cold;—I felt

* If memory does not deceive me, it was in a small strip of wood near this camp that some of my men saw a Flying-Squirrel. *Pteromys Sabrinus*. var. *β. Alpinus*. — *Rocky Mountain Flying-Squirrel*. RICHARDSON,—*Faun. Bor.-Am.*, vol. i. p. 195.

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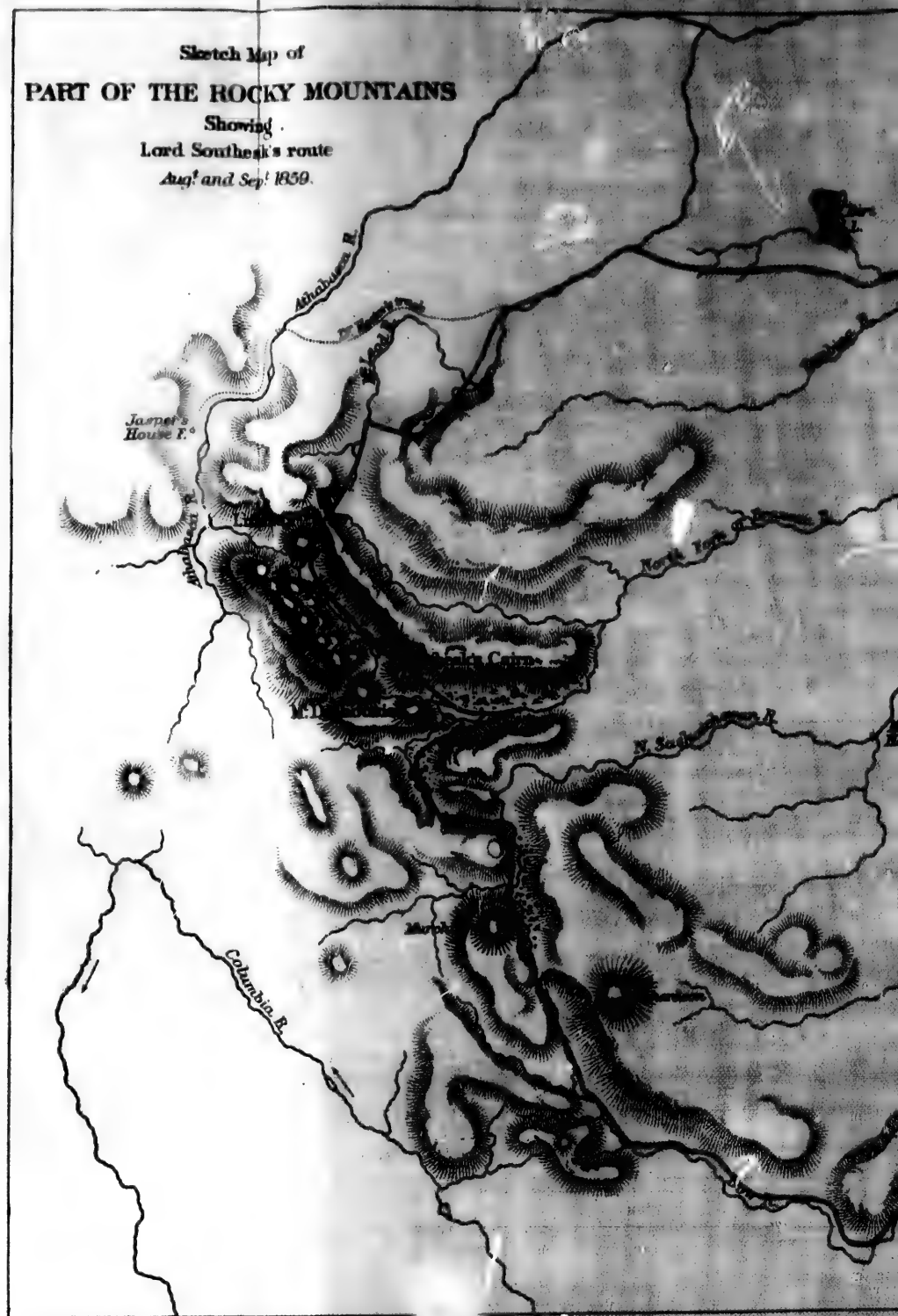
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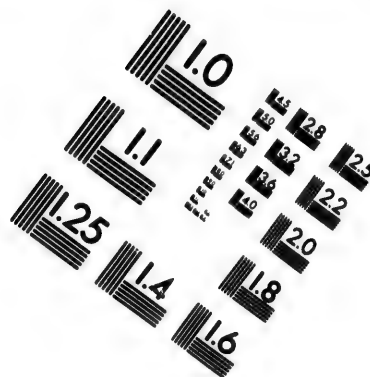


Sketch Map of
PART OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS
Showing
Lord Southesk's route
Aug^r and Sep^r 1859.

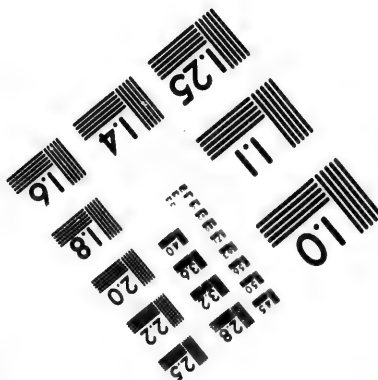
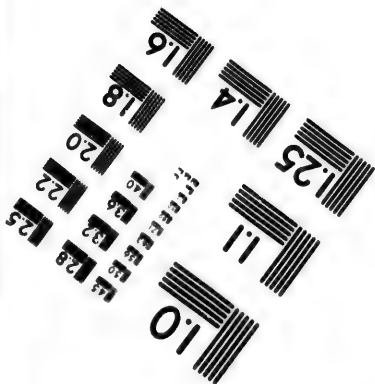








A resolution test chart featuring various patterns of horizontal and vertical lines of increasing frequency. Each pattern is accompanied by a numerical value indicating its resolution. The values include 1.0, 1.1, 1.25, 1.4, 1.6, 1.8, 2.0, 2.2, 2.5, 2.8, 3.2, 3.6, 4.0, 4.5, 5.0, 5.6, 6.3, 7.1, 8.0, 9.0, 10, 11.2, 12.5, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22.5, 25, 28, 32, 36, 40, 45, 50, 56, 63, 71, 80, 90, 100, 112, 125, 140, 160, 180, 200, 225, 250, 280, 320, 360, 400, 450, 500, 560, 630, 710, 800, 900, 1000, 1120, 1250, 1400, 1600, 1800, 2000, 2250, 2500, 2800, 3200, 3600, 4000, 4500, 5000, 5600, 6300, 7100, 8000, 9000, 10000, 11200, 12500, 14000, 16000, 18000, 20000, 22500, 25000, 28000, 32000, 36000, 40000, 45000, 50000, 56000, 63000, 71000, 80000, 90000, 100000, 112000, 125000, 140000, 160000, 180000, 200000, 225000, 250000, 280000, 320000, 360000, 400000, 450000, 500000, 560000, 630000, 710000, 800000, 900000, 1000000, 1120000, 1250000, 1400000, 1600000, 1800000, 2000000, 2250000, 2500000, 2800000, 3200000, 3600000, 4000000, 4500000, 5000000, 5600000, 6300000, 7100000, 8000000, 9000000, 10000000, 11200000, 12500000, 14000000, 16000000, 18000000, 20000000, 22500000, 25000000, 28000000, 32000000, 36000000, 40000000, 45000000, 50000000, 56000000, 63000000, 71000000, 80000000, 90000000, 100000000, 112000000, 125000000, 140000000, 160000000, 180000000, 200000000, 225000000, 250000000, 280000000, 320000000, 360000000, 400000000, 450000000, 500000000, 560000000, 630000000, 710000000, 800000000, 900000000, 1000000000, 1120000000, 1250000000, 1400000000, 1600000000, 1800000000, 2000000000, 2250000000, 2500000000, 2800000000, 3200000000, 3600000000, 4000000000, 4500000000, 5000000000, 5600000000, 6300000000, 7100000000, 8000000000, 9000000000, 10000000000, 11200000000, 12500000000, 14000000000, 16000000000, 18000000000, 20000000000, 22500000000, 25000000000, 28000000000, 32000000000, 36000000000, 40000000000, 45000000000, 50000000000, 56000000000, 63000000000, 71000000000, 80000000000, 90000000000, 100000000000, 112000000000, 125000000000, 140000000000, 160000000000, 180000000000, 200000000000, 225000000000, 250000000000, 280000000000, 320000000000, 360000000000, 400000000000, 450000000000, 500000000000, 560000000000, 630000000000, 710000000000, 800000000000, 900000000000, 1000000000000, 1120000000000, 1250000000000, 1400000000000, 1600000000000, 1800000000000, 2000000000000, 2250000000000, 2500000000000, 2800000000000, 3200000000000, 3600000000000, 4000000000000, 4500000000000, 5000000000000, 5600000000000, 6300000000000, 7100000000000, 8000000000000, 9000000000000, 10000000000000, 11200000000000, 12500000000000, 14000000000000, 16000000000000, 18000000000000, 20000000000000, 22500000000000, 25000000000000, 28000000000000, 32000000000000, 36000000000000, 40000000000000, 45000000000000, 50000000000000, 56000000000000, 63000000000000, 71000000000000, 80000000000000, 90000000000000, 100000000000000, 112000000000000, 125000000000000, 140000000000000, 160000000000000, 180000000000000, 200000000000000, 225000000000000, 250000000000000, 280000000000000, 320000000000000, 360000000000000, 400000000000000, 450000000000000, 500000000000000, 560000000000000, 630000000000000, 710000000000000, 800000000000000, 900000000000000, 1000000000000000, 1120000000000000, 1250000000000000, 1400000000000000, 1600000000000000, 1800000000000000, 2000000000000000, 2250000000000000, 2500000000000000, 2800000000000000, 3200000000000000, 3600000000000000, 4000000000000000, 4500000000000000, 5000000000000000, 5600000000000000, 6300000000000000, 7100000000000000, 8000000000000000, 9000000000000000, 10000000000000000, 11200000000000000, 12500000000000000, 14000000000000000, 16000000000000000, 18000000000000000, 20000000000000000, 22500000000000000, 25000000000000000, 28000000000000000, 32000000000000000, 36000000000000000, 40000000000000000, 45000000000000000, 50000000000000000, 56000000000000000, 63000000000000000, 71000000000000000, 80000000000000000, 90000000000000000, 100000000000000000, 112000000000000000, 125000000000000000, 140000000000000000, 160000000000000000, 180000000000000000, 200000000000000000, 225000000000000000, 250000000000000000, 280000000000000000, 320000000000000000, 360000000000000000, 400000000000000000,



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half dead with hunger besides, having eaten nothing all day. At supper I astonished myself, consuming at least three pounds of fried sheep: Toma could not cook the slices quick enough.

—‘Finished that noble play “The Merchant of Venice.” Had there been a fair tribunal, and another “second Daniel” to take Shylock’s part, I think the Jew would have come better out of it. It was mere quibbling to make him guilty of attempting the life of a citizen. You do not attempt a man’s life by accusing him before a court of justice of a capital crime, in the same sense as by stabbing him with a dagger.

‘Are we to understand that Shylock, Judas-like, committed suicide when he left the court? There is something peculiar in his exclamation, “I am not well.” A man of his stern character would have scorned to acknowledge any feeling of illness at such a time, unless he intended to end illness and health alike by ending his life. Besides, he would never really have consented to become a Christian, and his ready acceptance of that condition showed that he meant to break it,—and for that there was but one way.*

Sunday, September 18th.—We marched a few miles, in a southerly direction, up the course of the North Saskatchewan, and halted at Kootanie Plain. This so-called plain is merely an inconsiderable enlargement of the valley,—a space of ‘some fifty acres, bare of trees, and covered with short prairie grasses.’

* See Appendix.

CHAPTER XV.

KOOTANIE PLAIN TO OLD BOW FORT.

SEPTEMBER 19th.—The river Saskatchewan, though here not far from its source, is about forty yards in width, wherever it flows in a single channel, and so deep that we were obliged to cross it on rafts. While the ferrying went on, I ascended the mountains with Antoine in search of white goats ; we saw none, however, but fell in with a number of female sheep, one of which I shot without much trouble ; it was a very fine ewe, fat and well-conditioned, though in milk.

The crossing safely effected, we travelled along a broad track up the river, but discovering, after having followed it a good many miles, that it was leading us out of our proper course, we returned, and camped in the dark near our place of departure.

There was a high wind from the south, and towards night-fall rain came on.

September 20th.—A cold showery day. We succeeded in finding the right Bow River road ; it passed not far from the mountains that form the north side of the valley which runs eastward from opposite Kootanie Plain, and proved to be an excellent track, leading over hard ground through a long extent of thick fir-woods. There were traces of recent travellers, whom we supposed to have been Americans going to the Columbia,—said to be not more than three days' march from this neighbourhood.

Matheson, who had lately had an attack of pains and

sickness, was now quite recovered, some of my simple remedies perfectly meeting his case, but to-day another man was taken ill,—our interpreter, Piskan Munroe. He was seized with violent cramps in the stomach, a complaint he had suffered from before, and, without consulting any one, was rash enough to prescribe for himself, swallowing a whole charge of gunpowder mixed with water, which he declared had formerly done him good. As he seemed in great agony, bending with groans over his horse's neck when the fits attacked him, I decided on an early halt, though only half our usual day's march had been accomplished.

Candles now becoming scarce, Toma manufactured one for me; it was composed of sheep-fat run into a mould of stout cartridge paper, and burned remarkably well, nearly equalling wax in the clearness of its flame.

A very high gale arose from the south, the quarter whence wind and rain generally appeared to come. Several tracks of moose were seen near the road-sides.

September 21st.—'Munroe better. Off early, and made a long march up the valley, at first through thick woods clear of fallen timber, then over a country scantily dotted with trees, till we arrived at the height-of-land which divides the watersheds of the Saskatchewan and Bow rivers. There was a small rain all the morning, and when we got up to the high table-land this drizzle changed into a regular snowstorm.

'It was very weary work crossing miles of bleak open moor, with not a tree in sight, and only enough of the surrounding rocks and mountains visible through the mist to show how much noble scenery was being lost to me for ever. For ever! That is too strong a word; who can tell what powers of travel may be vouchsafed to the spirit after death?'
..... [A page or two continuing this subject are obliterated.]

'Camped for the night a short way down the course of a stream that runs into the Bow River. Numerous traces of bears ; the earth was absolutely ploughed up in large patches where they had been digging for roots. Shot two "partridges" with the rifle, and missed two.

'One of the Carlton horses failed, and was left on the road.'

September 22d.—'Snow and sleet all night, continuing all the morning. We are now reduced to very simple fare, as the whole of the flour is finished. Dried sheep-meat (getting mouldy), pemmican, and tea, are all we have. Thank God ! we have enough, and after the stomach is filled it matters little what has filled it, if only the food were wholesome.

'On coming to this side of the height-of-land, where the waters begin to flow east and south, I observe the larch again, a tree we have not seen since passing a few near Lake St. Ann. Here ~~they~~ grow on both sides of the valley, chiefly at a higher level than the spruce, which, in turn, grows higher up than the Scotch fir. These larches do not show the drooping habit of the kindred tree at home, but grow more in the cedar form, with branches that are horizontal or tending upwards. Their foliage is now of a bright pale yellow, which contrasts effectively with the dark green of the firs.'

September 23d.—After marching a few miles we arrived at an open spot by the river, and camped there early, as I wished to devote the rest of the day to hunting for white goats, being anxious to get some specimens of those scarce and very wary animals. The morning was unpromising when Antoine and I set out on our hunt ; storms of sleet went drifting by, and a thick mist enveloped the snow-clad mountains ; nevertheless we persevered, climbed several steep hills, and explored many likely places, but all in vain.

Towards evening we saw a band of grey sheep, and re-

solved to go after them, as there was no further chance of goats. It cost us a hard climb to get within range, but they took the alarm and only offered us awkward running chances, of which we made nothing, though perhaps I ought to have killed with one of my shots. In the excitement of the moment Antoine spoiled the little chance I had, by hurrying me on, and making various signs and speeches, before it was possible for me to see the sheep.

'A stalker should remember two things—1st, That, as he goes in front of the person he is guiding, he must generally (uphill *always*) see the animals before they are visible to the other man, and ought therefore to bear with some slowness on the part of his companion in seeing what he points out the moment it meets his own view.

'2dly, That most people are slightly nervous on coming in after a long stalk, and out of breath besides, so that excited demonstrations at such times do the greatest harm.

'The best plan is quietly to beckon your companion forward—quickly or slowly according to circumstances,—and in one short sentence give him any directions that may be really necessary, such as—"The large beast on the left;" "The second from the front,"—and so on.'

'Few things more show man's inherent conceit, than our habit of thinking that nothing can be done without our own valuable directions. As we marched through the plains I have often been amused to hear the whole party shouting together to any one going after prairie-fowl near the roadside:—That's the way! No, more to your left! There he goes behind the bush! Shoot him now! Not that one! No, the other, the other!—while the unfortunate sportsman danced about like a Highlander in a wasp's nest.

'Except with an absolute greenhorn, it is better to leave a

man to his own judgment when the decisive moment comes,—particularly in rifle-shooting, where your own unaided choice of the animal to be shot greatly assists the aim, harmonising the nerves and enabling you to shoot exactly at the right moment.'

After the sheep we had been firing at had moved away, Antoine observed a single ewe on a rock above us. I climbed to within fair distance, and wounded her severely, too low, however, and far back, so she had strength to run a long way over some very rough and broken ground. Tracking her by the blood spots—clear red circles on the chalky stones,—I followed to the very summit of the height, where the gradual upward slope abruptly stopped at a tremendous overhanging precipice, which formed the other side of the mountain. The sheep was not to be seen, but looking carefully over the brink, I discovered her standing on a narrow ledge a few yards beneath me; there was no way to approach nearer, so I gave her a finishing shot, on receiving which she rolled off the platform, and, falling many hundreds of feet, dropped upon the rocks and ice in the desolate abyss below.

Thinking all was over, I shouldered my rifle and returned to Antoine, little expecting to bring any of that wild-mutton home for supper.

The stout old hunter, however, at once proposed to go for our sheep, and after a considerable round we managed to reach the place where it was lying, much cut and broken, but not spoilt for use; then putting it on his back, he carried it for more than a mile, till we found our horses again,—no mean performance, considering the roughness of the ground and the weight of this two-year-old ewe, a beast certainly larger than a common roe-deer.

September 24th.—' After marching a few miles we observed

four white goats, half-way up a rocky mountain, upon which I halted the brigade, and set out on foot, with Antoine, in pursuit of them. We had a very severe climb to the place where they had been seen, and then found they had gone on. Antoine followed on their track, and I kept a little higher, till we came to a deep ravine, when he suddenly stopped and beckoned to me. I came on, making all possible haste, but the rock unluckily was of broken shale, over which one cannot go fast, and I was only in time to see the white fleeces streaming off a long way below. We both fired in vain, and then rushed off to intercept them, but they gained the ridge long before we did, though running with all our might.

‘Never did I feel more utterly prostrated. From various causes—my long journey on horseback, bad sleep owing to the cold at night, indifferent food of late, no drink stronger than tea, sudden hard work on foot since we came to the mountains, perhaps also owing to the height, above the sea-level, of the valleys among which we were ;—I was now very weak, and only able to climb steep places slowly, and with constant rests.

‘I had set my heart on getting some of these white goats ; but we were not likely to see any of them farther on our journey, my last chance seemed gone ; I lay there on the mountain side, weary, almost fainting with toil, and very sore at heart. These goats began to seem to me like the enchanted beasts in German stories, which lure men to destruction, and then mock at their misery. Once I had nearly broken my neck, and twice nearly burst a blood-vessel, in following them, —and all in vain. A sort of frenzy came over me, and I vowed to pursue them to the death.

‘We followed their track some way till it turned straight up the cliffs to the top of the mountain : Antoine then lighted

his pipe and prepared to descend. I proposed to go up, and he at once cheerfully consented. We had hard and dangerous work. [The cliff, which rose abruptly from a narrow ledge of shingle slanting to tremendous precipices, was exceedingly steep, and the projections on its half-decomposed surface were but small, and so loosely attached that they constantly broke at a touch.] In many places Antoine had to cut out steps with his knife in the brittle shale, and the melting snow from above rendered our footing slippery and unsteady, all the worse that our rifles left only one hand free. It was terrible to hear the dislodged stones falling down to unknown depths in the abyss beneath; but the only way to climb rocks is to shut the door on fancy, and rivet the eyes and mind on the spot where one's foot is to be next planted. The toil was severe; several times we were nearly defeated, but at length the summit of the cliff was gained.

'We then made a long ascent over broken rocks to a higher ridge, which formed the actual top of that part of the mountain, and rested there a while amidst ice and snow. Immediately beneath us a most singular view presented itself—an immensely deep, oval, crater-like hollow, of the most verdant grass, embedded in the heart of the mountain. At the bottom of it there was a beautiful lake, blue as a sapphire, and framed in with a narrow band of firs and larches.

'Alas! the goats were not to be seen, and after a long search we began descending some steep rocks in a different direction—utterly in despair.

'When about half-way down, Antoine, who was continually climbing rocks and looking about him, signed to me that something was in sight. Coming to him, I observed two of the enchanted beasts feeding below. He proposed to ascend again and come down on them, but I was quite unable,—so

we climbed along the face of the cliff on a very narrow ledge, and got within long range of the two goats, and within 120 yards of three others, which we had not seen before.

'We fired several shots, but without stopping any of them, and being so high above their level, as well as so far off, it was difficult to judge if any were wounded. At that moment the old ewe I had first shot at, confused by the echoes, came trotting back, but, having had time to reload, I rolled her over. At the same time Antoine wounded a three-year-old male, who began to rush off at a great pace, but I stopped him with a really good shot, right in the centre of the backbone, at more than 150 yards. Both these goats unfortunately fell over some twenty feet of rock, breaking their horns and tearing great holes in their skins, but I was glad to get them on any terms.

'These animals belong to the goat tribe, and are true goats in appearance. They are rather smaller than the grey sheep, and much shorter in the leg, and larger in the feet. Their horns are straight, hard, and pointed, of a shining black, and about 6 inches long, resembling those of the chamois, only not hooked at the end. (Perhaps the old males may have longer horns. I never saw one near enough to make sure: they are certainly not very long-horned.) Their hair is long and white, and very soft; they have beards like common goats, and the males have a strong musky smell. It is generally said that they are not good to eat, but we carried parts of them home to try, and I could perceive little difference in taste from the sheep. The old males no doubt would be uneatable.*

* *Capra Americana*. *Rocky Mountain Goat*. *Ovis Montana*—Ord, 1817. *Antelope Lanigera*—Smith, 1822. "Long straight hair, considerably coarser than the wool of sheep, but softer than that of the common goat. . . . Under the hair of the body there is a close coat of fine white wool ["fully an inch and a half long"]." RICHARDSON,—*Faun. Bor.-Am.*, vol. i. pp. 268-270.

'It was pitch dark before we got back to camp. On arriving at the river-side we found horses waiting, which the men had brought over in answer to our shouts. The crossing was almost amusing, there was such uncertainty as to the depths into which one's horse's next step might plunge one ; we got through, however, without accident.'

Sunday, September 25th.—All night and morning there was a steady pour of rain. Our camping-place was damp and confined, so we determined to leave it at once, and marched, accordingly, till we reached the Bow River, then travelled some distance down its course. Our road ran mostly through thick forest, and towards evening it became hilly and blocked with lying-wood.

Darkness came on very suddenly, and M'Kay and Matheson, who had stayed behind to arrange some of the packs, were unable to join us, and had to camp by themselves. They were better off than we were, having the tents and provision-stores with them ; but it signified little, for we managed to find sufficient food and covering,—Kline, indeed, raised me a shelter, by stretching the oil-cloth over poles, which answered quite as well as my own canvas tent.

Showery, cold weather ; rain again at night. The Carlton Bichon, who had been ill some time, got worse to-day, and finally gave out.

September 26th.—After about four miles' march we met an Assiniboine walking along the track by himself ; he turned back with us, and soon afterwards we came to four families of the same tribe.* We halted and camped in their neigh-

* A tribe of the Dacotah race, an offshoot of the Sioux. The mountain bands are commonly known as "Stonies," or "Stone Indians," the word Assiniboine signifying—"one who boils stones," a name referring to their ancient manner of cooking.

bourhood ; our hope being to get food and horses from the Indians,—theirs, to procure ammunition, clothes, and tobacco, in exchange.

—‘ I have just made the unpleasant discovery that we have barely two days’ provision in the camp. Our dried meat had become mouldy, and during my absences when hunting there has been shameful waste of our pemmican, some of the men, I am told, eating it all day long. This evil began at a time when there was so much fresh meat that I took no notice of the constant cooking and feasting, and a general system of waste and gluttony thus crept in. Now that it was too late, I had found out our perilous situation. It was impossible to get to Edmonton under a fortnight, and, except some ducks, there was little chance of any game on the road.

‘ Great gloom overspread the camp. I did my best to seem cheerful. I divided all the pemmican into portions—there was only enough for two days and a half—and served the tea out in allowances : for my own part, I ate some of the leg of the larger white goat brought in on Saturday. The old ewe must have reared a dozen kids at least,—tougher and drier fare I never fed on. . . . Read “ Romeo and Juliet.”

‘ In hopes of getting assistance, we sent off the hunter we had first fallen in with to a larger camp of his tribe, a good distance away, to ask them to join us on the road. In the evening I heard the Indians singing hymns. They are Christians, having had some teaching from Protestant missionaries, and seem to be most religious, excellent people.’

During to-day’s march we passed the site of a camp. On one of the neighbouring trees was written—“ Exploring Expedition. Aug. 23, 1859. Dr. Hector.”

September 27th.—The Indians, who were absent when we arrived, had now returned from their hunt. They had killed

three moose, two of which were very far off, but the other, which was nearer, they had gone to bring in for us. As further supplies were urgently required, I set out to look for sheep, though very unfit for much exertion, and ascended the mountain directly at the back of our camp. 'It was a hard climb, but Duncan (who was my only companion) carried my rifle : I could hardly carry myself, I felt so weak. [A strange sort of illness had come over me,—I could walk easily on level ground, but if the least hill began, my knee sinews lost their strength, and every step was painful.]

'When we reached the summit nothing was to be seen but rock and precipice, the whole upland valley between us and the farther mountain tops being a great basin of hard smooth stone, broken here and there with fissures—much like a tract of rocky sea-coast left bare at low water. Great masses of snow covered some of the slopes, and the scene was one of utter desolation : so we went but a short distance, and returned another way, having some dangerous precipices to descend, and several miles of lying-timber to cross.'

The Stonies duly brought in the moose. I paid them well, buying also at a liberal price two white goat-skins and two moose-skins, to their very evident gratification. M'Kay then began to deal with them for horses,—of which they had a pretty fair lot, but nothing really good, except a fine chestnut, which had formerly belonged to the Blackfeet.

'On asking the owner about it, he declared that he had many a time refused to part with this horse to his own people, and had even refused it to Dr. Hector, as it was his favourite, and the only buffalo-runner they had ; nevertheless, as he saw we were in want of horses, he would consult his wife, and consider if the sale were possible. He then talked very religiously, saying that they were " poor people

living here in the wilderness, thankful to God for the food He supplied them with in hunting, which was all they had for their families." What they most wanted, he added, was to hear about God and be more instructed in religion. M'Kay suggested to me that I should write out the Lord's Prayer, to be translated for them into Cree, which one of the women understood and could speak. I promised to do so, and, in regard to the chestnut, I told him that I would not take the poor man's best horse, but would buy from him another, which, though lame, might go as far as Edmonton.

'It was then settled that Lagrace should be added to M'Kay's mess,—partly to equalise the messes, partly to keep the old fellow's wasteful habits under control.'

September 28th.—To fulfil my promise, I wrote out a number of sentences from the New Testament, choosing those of a simple and encouraging character; I also wrote out the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed, as far as the words "judge the quick and the dead."

'M'Kay then read the whole, in Cree, to the Stonies, who were much interested; but afterwards told us that they had the Lord's Prayer and Creed already, though the rest was new. As none of them could read Cree, we did not translate the paper into writing, but they asked leave to keep it, as it was, "to remind them of the good things it contained."

'The man we had spoken with about the chestnut now said that he had determined I should have his best horse; that he would not sell me the bad one; that he would "willingly give me the horse for the sake of hearing these things about God."

'He absolutely insisted on my taking it, one way or other; we therefore exchanged for it Lane (who would soon have failed, but will perfectly recover with rest), and I gave him, besides—

a gun, blankets, tobacco, ammunition for the winter, a capot and some cloth, a knife, files, etc., everything, in short, that I could spare, considering the necessity of buying provisions and exchanging other horses on the way to Edmonton. The poor fellow was pleased and grateful, and thanked God for sending white men to him and his people.

‘In all this we see the hand of Providence. Had we not met these Indians we should have been reduced to great straits, and must soon have become very short of horses. They again had very little powder, and no lead—they were using bits of iron for bullets,—no tobacco, and only very ragged old leather clothing. Now, they were well supplied, and we were provisioned for a week, and had got two stout fresh horses ;—for I also exchanged Spot, with a number of things, for a useful beast belonging to another of the Indians.’

While the men were settling about their horses, all the wives and children came to my tent door, so I gave them a quantity of trinkets, besides a few more serviceable articles. It was amusing to see the delight with which one old woman received a “small-tooth” comb—certainly it seemed needed. I was able to bestow one of these on each tent, having packed a few among my stores, hearing that the Indians fancied them. After this, I brought out some lengths of coloured gartering, and invited the women, beginning at the oldest, to take their choice of the pieces. The senior immediately fixed on the green, the next took the red, and the two yellow rolls remained for the other ladies.

It interested me to watch the children playing with the young horses, as roughly and familiarly as if amusing themselves with pet dogs or lambs. They climbed over them, sat on their backs, made them walk, waded them in the shallows of the river ; they even tied lines to one of their gentle play-

felle's legs, and tugged away till they fairly pulled him down. The horses seemed to enjoy it, and never showed the least signs of temper, nor tried to escape from their kindly little tyrants.

An Indian, evidently far gone in consumption, came to my tent for medicine. Telling him that I had none quite suitable for his illness, I gave him a thick flannel shirt, advising him to wear it next his skin under his own wretched leather coat. To my surprise he seemed disappointed, and earnestly repeated his request for medicine. Though painful to deceive the poor man, it seemed better to humour him in his weak condition, so I opened my travelling bag, and presented him with a few mild pills of no very particular sort. He went away delighted, thanking me heartily for a gift which he probably believed to possess some magical virtue.

About mid-day we moved from our camping ground, and travelled a good distance in course of the afternoon.

September 29th.—It snowed a little during the night, and when we set out there was a high and bitterly cold north wind, which lasted the whole day. A band of eight white goats came into view, but we had not time to go after them; I shot, however, half-dozen "partridges," among them one very pretty bird with a ruff, which Toma said was of a kind common about Lachine.*

'We encamped in a hollow sheltered by bushes, near the foot of "The Mountain where the Water falls,"—an isolated rocky mountain in no way remarkable, except that a small stream runs down its face and loses itself in a hole in the earth.'

* *Tetrao Umbellus. Ruffed Grouse. White-flesher, and Pheasant*—Anglo-Americans. *Puspusqueu*—Crees. Total length of bird, 18 inches. RICHARDSON,—*Faun. Bor.-Am.*, vol. ii. p. 342.

Our Stony messenger met us on the road, bringing me a letter from his people, written in the Cree syllabic characters. It was translated to me as follows—"We thank God for sending us such a great man: we send our compliments to him: we will receive him as a brother."

September 30th.—Slept better last night than any time since leaving Fort Garry. The morning was lovely,—sunny, but with a bracing chilliness in the air.

'Our progress was much interrupted by fallen timber at first, and afterwards by hilly stony ground, but we succeeded in turning the corner of the valley, at the end of which are the ruins of Old Bow Fort. It is a pretty vale. The river winds through it in a deep, still, dark blue current, and forms numerous shallow lakes alongside its course, which are separated from the stream, sometimes by reedy flats, sometimes by low wooded banks.

'Poplar brush is the principal growth in the lower grounds, and at this season the bright yellow of the dying leaves contrasts very beautifully with the dark pines that overspread the surrounding crags, often to their very top. The larch almost ceases in the Bow River valley, though a few are occasionally to be seen. From the neighbourhood of the Hill of the Water-fall to the extreme end of the mountains, we were constantly passing groups of really large pines—silver, spruce, and Scotch fir,—the greater number apparently about ten to twelve feet in girth, one silver fir, however, must have been half as large again.

'Most of them bore traces of the fires which are the curse of this region, which have destroyed the beauty of these noble valleys, ruining the magnificent forests that ages had matured, and leaving in their stead endless tracts of charred and decaying remains, amidst which wretched seedlings struggle up

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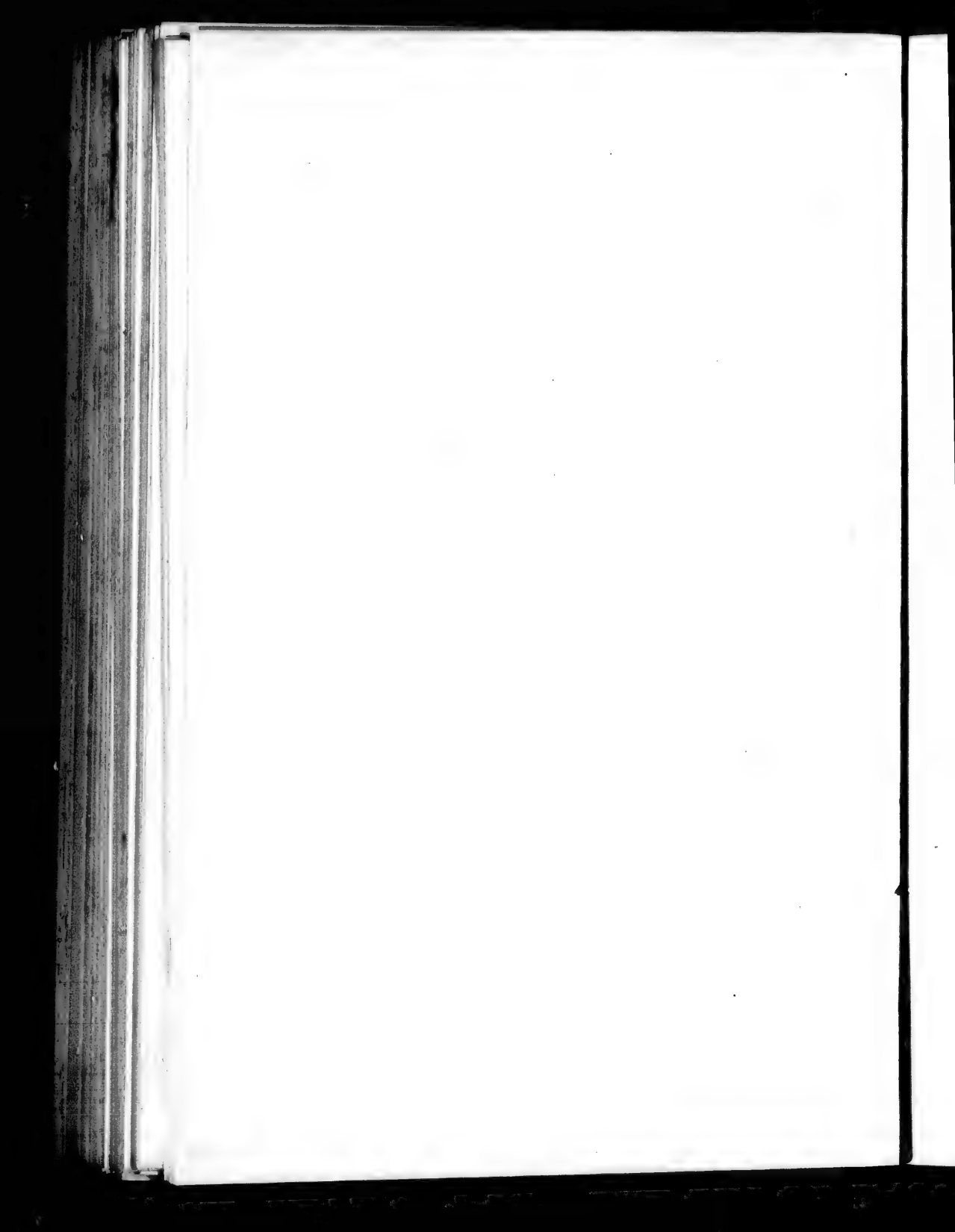
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LETTER FROM THE MOUNTAIN ASSINIBOINES. SEPTEMBER 29TH 1859.



as best they may. It grieves the heart of a lover of trees to travel through America. For hundreds and thousands of miles his eyes behold nothing but wholesale destruction of those noblest ornaments of the earth. Fire everywhere, the axe everywhere, the barking-knife and the bill-hook,—joint ravagers with the storm, the lightning, and the flood,—all busy in pulling down nature's forest handiwork—and who builds up anything in its stead?

'If the half-breed wishes to do honour to a friend, he chooses the most conspicuous tree, prunes off all its branches, and calls it Friend So-and-so's lob-stick:—thus he raises his monument. The American strips the greenery from whole provinces, then builds sawmills and log-houses, and calmly offers the exchange to the universe—like a knave who steals an Indian's horse, and offers him a bottle of rum in its place:—thus he raises his monument.

'The mountains become perceptibly lower after one enters Bow valley, and continue to lessen in height at each succeeding great bend of the river, but their rocky character remains unchanged. We were still among them when evening drew on, and such a gale of wind arose from the west that we hastened to camp ourselves in the heart of a thick young wood to escape its fury.'

Toma cooked me some moose-nose for dinner:—'cartilage and fat like beaver's tail—very good.'

CHAPTER XVI.

OLD BOW FORT TO FORT EDMONTON.

‘BY mid-day we arrived at Old Bow Fort (a deserted settlement of the Hudson's Bay Company), all heartily glad to leave the mountains, amidst whose rugged passes we have lost three horses, and seen most of the others become walking skeletons, footsore and feeble ; where we have consumed all our provisions, and endured much unseasonable cold.

‘For my own part, I entirely share in the general joy. Grand as is the scenery of the Athabasca mountains, it has fallen short of my expectations, which looked for sky-piercing peaks and heights towering above the clouds, features by no means often discoverable even in the remoter ranges among which we travelled.’ [The valleys we had passed through being some 5000 feet above the sea, the mountains, as seen from them, lose to that extent in height as well as in grandeur of character ; thus elevations twice as great as Ben Nevis show hardly larger than the more lofty among the Scottish or English hills, while ranges far higher than the rest do not exceed 7000 to 8000 feet in apparent altitude. According to the *Government Exploring Expedition*, the peak immediately above Kootanie Plain (no way remarkable so far as I remember) is 8913 feet high ; while, nearly opposite, Mount Murchison (below which our track led us on the 21st of September) rises to a height of 15,789 feet, considerably surpassing Mont Blanc. Old Bow Fort, outside the mountains, and at the edge

of the plains, is 4100 feet above the sea, nearly equalling Ben Nevis, the highest point in Great Britain.]

'Then my anticipations of sport have been greatly disappointed. Instead of the hundreds of grisly bears I had been led to expect, I have only seen one, and that at a distance.' [Unless disturbed in their hiding-places, bears are seldom seen except at early dawn. By knowing this I might have had better sport, for there were plenty of grislies about, to judge from their numerous tracks. I half think that my people were not zealous in the matter, dreading the risk—for me more than themselves—in a country so far from help in case of accident.] 'Instead of white goats crowning every rocky height, or reposing in herds on the sunny slopes of the lower hills, I have seen but a few scattered bands, and only got two indifferent specimens, after toil that has left me so weak that I can scarcely carry my rifle. With the grey sheep only have I been fortunate; and there also my success was obtained with great labour, except on two occasions.

'Every deerstalker knows the effort of climbing the first hill to get command over the ground, but be it remembered that in these mountains merely to reach the foot of the precipices is a very steep ascent of more than a mile, made doubly difficult by the roughness of the ground and the quantity of thick brush and fallen timber through which a way has to be forced. And then, towering above you, there are hundreds of feet of bare and often slippery crags, which cannot be scaled without taxing every muscle to the uttermost. On the 1st of September I entered the mountains with joy, on the 1st of October I leave them with greater joy.'

[Feelings scarcely comprehended at the time—of relief at throwing off a leaden bondage, of warmth and brightness, of life and joy and freedom—were swelling in every heart. There

is something appalling in the gloom of the deep mountain valleys which had so long been our home, confined within tremendous barriers of unmitigated rock,—a gloom most horrible when storms and mists prevail, and not altogether absent when the sun is pouring down wide floods of cheerfulness.

Words cannot describe the desolation of the cold grey dawn in these rock-bound valleys, when heavy frost grapples the whole face of the earth, and nothing stirs with a full and energetic vitality except invisible creeping chills. The very mass and vastness of the mountains depress and daunt the soul; scarcely can you look up at the blue sky without some portentous object sternly frowning-down your gaze. You feel yourself imprisoned under some mighty ogre's sway; the unassailable, prodigious potencies that beset you all around crush out your courage, "o'ercrow your spirit" quite. In leaving the mountains, we seemed to me to resemble the band of travellers in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, making their glad escape from Doubting Castle, the stronghold of that evil tyrant Giant Despair.]

'The ruins of Bow Fort stand on a high bank overhanging the river,—here very rapid and about fifty yards wide. Looking eastward down the vale, the eye ranges far over extensive prairies, bounded by low hills, whose features are partly hidden by a few small woods occupying their slopes and spreading into the valleys beneath. The colours of the foliage were most lovely in rich autumnal tints,—gold, olive, green, and crimson, according to the different varieties of trees that were grouped into clumps, or mingled together in the groves.

'The plains are all strewn with skulls and other vestiges of the buffalo, which came up this river last year in great numbers. They were once common in the mountains. At

the Kootanie Plain I observed some of their wallowing-places,* and even so high as a secluded little lake, near where the horses were taken up the ice-bank, I noticed certain traces of them. They are now rapidly disappearing everywhere : what will be the fate of the Indians, when this their chief support fails, it is painful to imagine.

'Large as were the herds I saw in July, they were nothing to what I have heard and read of, and there is reason to believe that I then beheld all the buffaloes belonging to the two Saskatchewan valleys and the intervening country, pressed from various quarters into one great host. There were none near Edmonton, none near Pitt, none near Carlton, during the whole winter,—the inhabitants meanwhile almost starving. And now I learn that the Blackfeet have been compelled to leave their usual settlements, and go far south in pursuit of their means of existence.'

As we approached Bow Fort, we were met by three Stonies, who came to inform us that the rest were encamped close by. It appeared that they had neither fresh meat nor provisions of any kind, but that "bounding-deer" (*Le Chevreuil* †) were plentiful in the neighbouring woods, where some of their young men were then engaged in hunting them. In the evening this party returned, having killed seven deer, upon which M'Kay gave them supplies of ammunition, and sent them to the forest again on our account.

Antoine and I had already started on the same errand, riding Moutonne and Jasper, as we usually did when hunting or exploring together. We forded the river, which was so deep and strong as nearly to carry the horses off their legs, and then made long search among the woods and poplar clumps, but without getting a chance, though we saw five

* See footnote, p. 96.

† See footnote, p. 113.

of the *chevreuils*. It was dangerous, difficult work to recross the river, in the utter darkness that had set in by the time we reached its margin.

The water had somewhat risen since our former crossing, and now came well above our knees, freezing our blood with its icy chill. Jasper's great strength made up for his want of size, and he contrived to hold his own, but, between the weight of the current and the darkness, we drifted out of the true line, and it seemed a very long journey before we landed on the opposite side.

Toma, and others of the party, had been fishing while we were away, baiting their hooks with pieces of raw meat, and had managed to catch fourteen fine trout, some of them as heavy as several pounds apiece. They were in excellent order, and made an agreeable change in our rather monotonous suppers.

October 2d.—A tremendous north-westerly gale blew the whole night long. Being in a high and much exposed situation we were quite unsheltered from its fury, and it beat upon us with terrific violence. My tent soon showed signs of yielding to the strain; presently one of the poles broke across, and everything fell in a heap upon my body. No step could be taken to repair damages amidst the darkness and the raging storm, so I was doomed to pass a most uncomfortable night, feeling much as if beneath a gigantic fan, as the canvas flapped steadily to and fro, and drove eddies of air through every covering I could devise.

On searching about near the fort, we had found the remains of a number of carts, left behind by Captain Blakiston and different American travellers, preparatory to making their entrance into the mountains; and, as many parts of these vehicles were still in fair order, M'Kay proposed that we should build ourselves new ones out of the fragments.

Pack saddles are the only conveyance adapted for mountain work, but in the plains carts are far preferable, one horse being able to draw more than two can carry; besides which, the time occupied in removing the packs at every halt is saved, and the men are relieved from the labour of tying and untying all the leather thongs, a troublesome and difficult job in wet or frosty weather.

We hoped to have found harness also, but there were disappointed, for the cache made by Captain Blakiston had been opened, and everything carried off. Matheson (having belonged to that party) had been present when the things were stored away, and perfectly remembered the place,—indeed we found a board with written directions, which would have guided us sufficiently had he been mistaken.

This mattered little, however, for M'Kay at once engaged to make harness as well as carts. He was as good as his word; by mid-day his work was finished, and we had the pleasure of seeing three carts and their harness all complete; the whole skilfully put together in a few hours by my handy men, who had a knack of overcoming all difficulties, and making everything out of nothing at the shortest notice. [One of my shooting-boots having been cut by the rocks, Kline mended it as firmly as any professional cobbler could have done; he also repaired my telescope-case in the same workmanlike manner.]

The storm having abated, we marched a few miles to a more sheltered place; where all the Indians presently joined us, forming their encampment close to mine. Soon afterwards the hunters came in, and brought us five *chevreuils* and a goose, as the produce of our ammunition, so we were once again abundantly supplied.

While some of the older Indians were talking with us, I

happened to notice a pipe, which one of the head men was holding in his hand. It was neatly carved out of black slate-like stone, though the stem was merely a rough piece of fir. On hearing that I admired it, the owner immediately presented it to me with the most obliging politeness. I afterwards gave him in return some things that I found him to be in want of, adding two pair of my own woollen socks, which he received with interest, though evidently puzzled as to their exact use.



ASSINIBOINE PIPE AND STEM.

— At night a bell was rung in the Assiniboine camp, and the Indians all joined in singing hymns, as they do every night. The service lasted some time. It was a sort of chant, the men and women occasionally singing in parts. Their preacher is an aged and venerable man. He learned Christianity from another Indian, I believe, but his gift of preaching is entirely self-developed. Mr. Woolsey had since

occasionally visited these people, who, as far as I could learn, are now well instructed in the Christian faith, and certainly carry out its precepts in their lives.*

October 3d.—The Indians' dogs were exceedingly troublesome all night long, making continual attempts to carry off our fresh meat, which was their particular attraction. Woke by these intruders several times, I went out and drove them away, but they always came back again as impudently as ever. There was a thin coating of snow on the ground this morning, the result of an easterly wind that began after the great gale had spent its force.

—‘I had been considering what I could do for these poor and most worthy Indians, and a plan having occurred to me, I sent for the chief man, and spoke to him as follows—M'Kay interpreting. I said—that I was very glad to have met them, and much pleased by the kindness with which they had received and helped me; that it also made me glad to find that they were Christians, and so well remembered what they had been taught; that God never failed to help those who put their trust in him, and that He had put it into my heart to do them good; that I had not much with me here, but that if they would send with my party two of their young men, with spare horses and packs, as far as Edmonton, they should return with a supply of blankets, ammunition, and such other things as they wanted, which I would give them as a token of friendship and goodwill.

‘The Assiniboines were much delighted, and gratefully accepted my offer, expressing their thankfulness in broken words.

‘This plan, I think, promises well. Apart from the duty

* Through some misapprehension of M'Kay's, I was led to underrate the extent of Mr. Woolsey's ministrations among these people. The subject is more fully gone into afterwards.

and pleasure of helping these really poor people, I feel that to them we owe our rescue from great privations, if not starvation itself; and though, as it happened, I was able to pay for all we got, I am satisfied that had we been destitute there would have been no difference in their liberality. The men who accompany us will hunt for us on the way, and their spare horses will also be serviceable, so that they may freely receive whatever I send them without feeling themselves recipients of charity. So small a sum, indeed, will suffice to make these few families happy, that the circumstances alone make the matter worth noting.'

Poor as they were, these Indians had a farm, on which they grew different sorts of vegetables. We got some turnips from them, which were pretty good, though not of large size.

The old preacher happening to say that he had never seen a likeness of Queen Victoria, I gave him a half-crown piece that bore Her Majesty's image, which excited great admiration. At the same time I divided a few trinkets among the women.

We did very little about horses, only arranging to leave one of the Edmonton animals, which was nearly giving out, in exchange for a strong black mare; paying two blankets and some other things besides, and engaging to send the owner a third blanket (which he particularly asked might be a green one) on the return of the messengers. Before we left I made a trifling purchase from two of the Stonies, buying from one a beaded knife-sheath, and a beaded fire-bag from the other, which, though worn and dirty, and not remarkable in pattern, I was glad to have as specimens of their commoner work.

The snow having nearly disappeared, we now struck our tents, and made a short afternoon march of two or three miles, putting ourselves beyond the reach of the troublesome Indian

dogs. This enabled us to freeze all our venison by setting it out in the open air during the night—Whisky muzzled in consequence, to his great disgust.



ASSINIBOINE KNIFE-SHEATH AND FIRE-BAG.

October 4th.—The two Stonies who were to accompany us joined us this morning: one of them, we found, had lately been in Dr. Hector's employ. I was much struck by the

beauty of their hands, which seemed to me the smallest and shapeliest I had ever beheld on men. Perhaps this special handsomeness only belonged to one particular Assiniboine band, for no other Indians known to me approached them in that respect.

Another young man also added himself to our party, intending to ride with us a short distance. He was accompanied by his wife, who was certainly the prettiest Indian woman I had yet had a chance of seeing. Instead of being lean, flat, and bony, she was plump and well-proportioned in figure; her features were good, though a little thick; her expression was remarkably pleasant and good-humoured. Below her under lip three blue perpendicular lines, about an inch in length, were tattooed with much care and distinctness.

Before we had gone many miles we observed a large party approaching us on the open plain. We supposed them to be Blackfeet, and as they were on bad terms with the Stonies, all of us loaded and prepared for a fight. The three Indians then rode forward with myself and two others to reconnoitre; and, to my amusement, as soon as we left the rest, the pretty young woman pushed briskly on and joined us, evidently considering her husband's side by far the safest place when danger threatened.

We soon made out the enemy to be nothing but a company of Americans, bound for Fraser's River. Mr. Hind, whom I had met on the 9th of August, was among the number, having fallen in with his present companions at Fort Carlton. Mr. Colville — brother of Sheriff Colville of St. Paul, Mr. Dickman, Mr. Reid, and two or three others whose names I did not learn, made up the whole brigade. There were two very fine mules, of immense size, in their band, but having rather too few horses, they had already

been twelve days on the road from Edmonton, which was poor travelling.

'It was an agreeable and useful meeting on both sides. They liberally supplied us with salt, flour, rice, dried apples, etc., as far as they could, and we, in return, gave them tobacco, fresh meat, a moose-skin, and a shoeing-hammer. Besides this, Matheson shod several of their horses. We also engaged one of the Stonies for them as guide over part of the mountains, an arrangement they could not have made for themselves, having no interpreter, and speaking no Indian language.

'We dined together, then parted with many kind wishes and farewells, and went on our ways rejoicing.'

After this we made a good march over a prairie country, and camped for the night in a hollow between two hills. On the way we saw a number of bounding-deer and four wolves. It was fine winter weather: bright sunshine and hard frost. The Pleiades and Aldebaran were now visible after sunset.

October 5th.—Intense frost. Rose before break of day, and travelled through hilly prairies interspersed with a few small poplar woods, till we came to Dog River, an insignificant stream, where we halted to partake of our breakfast-dinner.

The Stonies, who had been hunting all the morning, now rejoined us, bringing in one black-tailed deer. They had killed four others, but left them, as too heavy to carry.

'We spoke about sending for this quantity of meat, but they laughed at the notion. "What's the use?" they said; "there are plenty more deer on the road,—easy to get, as they are not much hunted hereabouts."

'This is an illustration of Indian improvidence: these Stonies, on their own hunting-grounds, needlessly destroy game, knowing that the scarceness of game in most of the

surrounding country had often brought people to the verge of starvation,—that this very year the Jasper's House hunters had been obliged to go elsewhere in search of sustenance.

'With the buffalo it is the same—kill, kill, kill. All the year round the Indians are hunting and slaughtering them, and in the winter they drive them into "pounds" by hundreds at a time, and murder every beast in the enclosures, male and female, young or old, usable or useless. Such waste will soon bring its bitter punishment.'

October 6th.—Made a very long march over an undulating country, and halted for dinner a good deal later than usual, owing to the difficulty of finding wood and water. The same cause obliged us to travel on for an hour after dark; the moon, however, gave some little light, though obscured by clouds.

Shot two young musk-rats at the edge of the quiet pool beside which we were camping, and had them cooked as part of supper. I thought them rather good, 'like rabbits, with a duck flavour.' They are not real rats, but more of the beaver tribe, living entirely on vegetable food.* Shot also several prairie-fowl in course of the day.

October 7th.—The country became more hilly as we approached Red Deer River. Again we had to march for an hour in the dark, camping for the night near a swampy piece of water about a mile off the regular track.

A flock of wild swans rose from a lake as we passed by, soared upwards, and streamed away into the distance in a long and waving line. I watched the beautiful creatures till they were so far off as to seem like a white ribbon floating across the deep indigo-blue of the evening sky.

* *Fiber Zibethicus*. The *Musquash* (*Musk-beaver*, *Musk-rat*). *Musquash* . . . also *Pesquaw-tupryew* (the animal that sits on the ice in a round form) —Cree Indians. "Length of head and body, 14 inches; of tail, 8½ inches." RICHARDSON, —*Faun. Bor.-Am.*, vol. i. p. 115.

October 8th.—Another change in the weather ; yesterday it was very warm with a hot sun, to-day the wind blew from the north, and it was bitterly cold. There were plenty of all varieties of wild-fowl in the lakes and pools. Short stalked and shot a swan this morning before breakfast, and a goose and a duck were brought in by the hunters at the same time. We also saw a number of rabbits—as they are called, though more resembling the Scotch mountain hare. They were but poor eating, like a particularly tasteless rabbit of the common kind.*

After leaving camp, a few miles brought us to Red Deer River ; we had a considerable march, however, along its course before reaching the crossing-place at the bend. At that point the stream was nearly 100 yards wide, being spread over gravelly shallows, but elsewhere it averaged only half that width, in its then low and empty condition.

Shooting at some ducks near the river, I started a black bear, to which M'Kay and I gave chase, and ran him pretty hard. Old Cendré went well, but the bear doubled so craftily in the brushwood, that we could never get near him, and at length he escaped us altogether.

Camped at Blind River, eight miles from the Red Deer River ford.

Sunday, October 9th.—Slight snow-storm at night ; very cold north-west wind. Short made another successful stalk, and brought in two fine young swans.

* The dogs caught a curious animal, like a large dormouse. [Beyond the facts that it was about the size of a small common

* *Lepus Americanus.* *The American Hare.* *Rabbit*—European Residents at Hudson's Bay. *Le Lapin*—French Canadians. *Wapoos*—Cree Indians. "In the fur-countries this hare becomes white in the winter. . . . Length of head and body, 19 inches." RICHARDSON,—*Faun. Bor.-Am.*, vol. i. p. 217.

rat, or of a very large thick-set mouse, and had conspicuous pouches on the sides of its head, I do not distinctly remember the appearance of this animal; but my impression is that its colour was a brownish grey, and its tail hairy, and of no great length. I took its skin as a specimen, but unfortunately lost it in course of the journey.

From Sir John Richardson's work I gather the following particulars regarding the class of animal to which it might no doubt be assigned. There are two genera of Sand-rats,—belonging to one or other of which are at least six or seven distinct species,—the one classified by some naturalists as *Geomys*, the other as *Diplostoma*:—"The sand-rats belonging to the former having cheek-pouches, which are filled from within the mouth, and the *gauffres* or *camas-rats* of the latter genus having their cheek-pouches exterior to the mouth, and entirely unconnected with its cavity." Both these genera are of burrowing habits, but while the rat of the *geomys* tribe appears to use its pouches only as a receptacle for the acorns, nuts, roots, plants, etc., that form its food, with the *diplostoma* rat "these pouches serve the purpose of bags for carrying the earth out of their holes. They are filled with the foreclaws, and emptied at the mouth of the hole by a power which the animal possesses of ejecting the pouches from each cheek, in the manner that a cap or stocking is turned."—*Faun. Bor.-Am.*, vol. i. pp. 197-209.]

'Bears feed almost entirely on roots and mice, and besides eating the latter, they dig up and devour the hoards of seed which the poor little creatures collect for their winter use. Strange, such a huge beast as a grisly bear feeding on a mouse! A moose is more what one would expect.'

October 10th.—Crossed Battle River before dinner, and

camped in the middle of a large plain. Ducks and prairie-fowl in great numbers.

The moon appeared to-night with a luminous ring around her, enclosing also the greater part of the eastern sky ; it was of a clear light, and showed no prismatic colouring.

October 11th.—Marched before sunrise. The morning, as usual, very frosty and cold ; succeeded by a cool, cloudy day. Before dinner we arrived at the point where the Blackfoot track to Edmonton strikes into the road we were travelling. Near this place Brun Farouche gave out ; he had been ill for some time, and had latterly been spared from carrying his load ; he now became too weak to follow us any more, so we had to leave him to his fate.

On coming to Pike Creek we found that the beavers had dammed it up below the track, making the water so deep as to oblige us to raise all the baggage in the carts, by supporting it on poles laid across. While this arrangement was in progress, I went to look at the dams, and near the uppermost observed several trees of eight inches diameter lying prostrate, cut down by the knife-like teeth of the beavers ; other good-sized trees were approaching their fall, being gashed with large nicks almost to the centre.

Having passed Pike Creek, we had a disagreeable journey over some twelve miles of recently burnt country, and camped at length in a wilderness of brush, after an unusually long march—of not less than thirty-five miles. As we pitched the tents, a little foal, left behind by some former travellers, emerged from the thicket, and came trotting up to our horses, with whom he joined company, delighted to find himself with friends of his own race.

‘ It was a beautiful sight to watch the full orb of the sun sinking in the west amidst clouds of black, purple, orange,

and gold, while the full orb of the moon rose in the opposite heavens amidst clouds of purple, lilac, pink, and amber,—the two great cloud-masses exactly balanced in size, and correspondent in colour, though the former was reflected by the latter in feebler and softer hues.'

A number of ducks and prairie-fowl were shot to-day, which, with the remains of the Americans' rice, served for our supper: we were then left without a vestige of provisions, except a handful of flour and 3lbs. of mouldy pemmican.

October 12th.—'Some of the men started very early and went forward to shoot game, and, as we proceeded on our march, we were constantly coming upon the ducks and rabbits they had killed and left hanging on conspicuous branches for our benefit. I could not help thinking of the commonplace phrase—You see your dinner: and this well-seen dinner was well eaten, to the very last atom, at White Mud River, where we halted to rest, after about four hours' travelling.

'As we were now near Edmonton we all made ourselves as clean and smart as we could, and, these preparations finished, two hours more brought us to the Fort, where flying colours and cannon salutes gave us the first part of the cordial welcome that greeted our return.

'Mr. Christie, who is now in charge, received me with the utmost kindness and hospitality. I had also the pleasure of meeting again the Rev. M. Le Frain from St. Ann, and Mr. Macaulay from Fort Pitt. Mr. Brazeau has gone to Rocky Mountain House, and Mr. Woolsey is engaged in a missionary tour.

'There is a wonderful improvement in the Fort. Order and cleanliness everywhere prevail. . . . It is delightful to be again enjoying some of the comforts of civilisation,—such as wine, well-made coffee, vegetables, cream-tarts, and other good things too many to mention.

'Some of Captain Palliser's men have just returned, and report his safe arrival at Fort Colville. They bring the worst account of Fraser's River,—neither gold nor food to be got.

'No very late news from Europe: the latest speak of a great battle being imminent, between the Austrians and the united French and Sardinian armies.

'Poor Rowland has died. Swimming the river probably killed him, the cold being too much for him in his reduced condition.'

October 13th.—This morning I settled with Munroe and Antoine Blandoine, giving each a small remembrance in token of goodwill. To the worthy old hunter, however, I was glad to make a further present as a mark of more particular regard, and we parted with very real signs of regret on his part,—which I entirely reciprocated, for a more honest, excellent man it would be impossible to meet with anywhere.

I then had all the horses brought together, and after a careful inspection with M'Kay, decided to leave eleven; among which I regretted having to include the fine chestnut bought from the Stonies at Bow River, as an internal illness had suddenly seized him about three days before, and reduced him to mere skin and bone. It was arranged that Mr. Christie should take over these horses for the Company, and enter them to my credit as a balance against those supplied to me on different occasions, rating the whole of them at a certain average value. My account, therefore, now stood as below:—

| Horses received from the
Company. | Horses given or returned to
the Company. |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| At Carlton 3 | At St. Ann 1 |
| At Edmonton 8 | At Jasper's House . . 1 |
| | At Edmonton . . . 11 |
| <hr/> | <hr/> |
| Total . . 11 | Total . . 13 |
| <hr/> | <hr/> |

Showing a balance of two in my favour.

I had now only nine horses, besides the six left at Carlton in July, as the following statement will explain :—

Horses transferred.

Wawbee.
Bleu.
Revolver.
Sharp.
Duncan 2d.
Short-tail.
Chocolat.
Brun.
Black.
Moutonne.
Chestnut.

Total 11

Horses kept.

Cendré.
Jasper.
Pitt Bichon.
M'Gillis (Blond).
Rémont.
Wawpooss 2d.
Mission Cendré.
Skewbald.
Black mare.

Total 9

Horses lost.

Whiteface . . strayed, Aug. 23d.
Bay . . . died, Sept. 13th.
Prince . . . gave out, Sept. 21st.
Carlton Bichon gave out, Sept. 25th.
Brun Farouche gave out, Oct. 11th.
Rowland . . died, Oct. 12th.

Total 6

Horses at Carlton.

Morgan.
Vermont.
Paul.
Anthony.
Mousey.
Deserter.

Total 6

October 14th.—‘Took leave of the Assiniboinés this morning, giving them their present, with the following letter to their people :—

‘My Friends—I send you some things as I promised. There are . . . blankets. The green one is for the man from whom I got the black mare, the others are to be given to the two old men to be divided among your families. I also send . . . bullets, with powder; . . . knives, a packet of tobacco, and . . . kettles, to be distributed in the same way. The three caps are for the two old men and the old man who preaches.

'I have given three blankets, some clothes, a shirt, . . . bullets, and some tobacco to the three men who came here,—for themselves.

'I hope you will take care not to waste the ammunition.

'I trust God may grant you health and prosperity : and I shall always remain your friend,
SOUTHESK.'

[In a letter from the Rev. Mr. Settee (with whom, as it will be seen, I afterwards became acquainted at Fort Pelly), dated January 11th, 1871, I received the sad news that small-pox had carried off the whole camp of these poor Mountain Stonies. The disease first appeared in the Saskatchewan district about the month of July 1870, and made terrible ravages among the Indian tribes.]

That afternoon I sent off all the horses to Carlton, in charge of Kline and Lagrace. My plan, as finally arranged, was to travel there by river in one of the Company's large boats, which, under ordinary circumstances, is by far the quickest and easiest way. I hoped to hire six more horses at that fort, which, with those left in summer, would enable me to reach Fort Pelly, where it was considered that dog-trains were most likely to be found. If all went well, I expected to arrive at Carlton about the end of that month, and at Fort Garry towards the beginning of December.

Sunday October 16th.—[A ridiculous thing happened this morning. I was in the act of washing myself in my india-rubber bath, when suddenly the door flew open, and two splendidly dressed Indians walked into the room as if the whole place belonged to them, but on seeing me they stopped, and stared with all their might. We stared at one another for a moment, then a radiant smile came over their faces, and there was a general laugh, after which I continued

my sponging, to their evident wonder and amazement. What they thought of the ceremony I never happened to find out.]

These men were envoys from the Blackfeet, sent as fore-runners, according to the usual custom, to announce the near approach of the whole tribe, who were coming on the following Tuesday, under the leadership of the chiefs Nahtooss and Bull-head, to pay their annual autumn visit to the Fort.

Every one agreed in speaking of these arrivals as very picturesque and interesting displays, and much did I regret being unable to stay for the occasion, but the lateness of the season prevented me. Even a day was precious just now, there being barely time to reach Fort Carlton before the period at which the river generally freezes up; and the state of the weather increased our anxiety to set off, for the cold was severer than usual at this date, and a heavy fall of snow had occurred on Friday night.

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CHAPTER XVII.

FORT EDMONTON TO FORT PITT.

OCTOBER 17th.—All our arrangements being completed, we embarked in Mr. Christie's own new and roomy boat, "The Golden Era," which he had obligingly lent us for the voyage, and by noon were fairly on our way down the broad current of the Saskatchewan River. I felt depressed, almost sorrowful, on leaving Edmonton, where I had been made more than comfortable, through the constant attentions and hospitalities of my kind entertainers, and but little could be gathered from the aspect of nature to chase away gloom and raise one's spirits to cheerfulness. Bright as shone the sun the cold was most cruelly severe, and there was something very melancholy, although not wanting in poetic charm, in the monotonous, incessant flight of legions of ducks, which swiftly and steadily winged their way down the river, pursuing their accustomed easterly course in search of more warm and genial habitations. But travellers view things practically; so those who were not rowing brought out their guns, and immense blazing at the ducks went on; seven only, however, were actually secured, for the birds flew high and wild, and those that we merely wounded could seldom be recovered.

At nightfall we drew in to the shore, and kindled our fire on a dry, sandy beach: then, after supper, we made a very pleasant companionable party, all sitting together round the blazing logs, as was our custom before the arrival of the

Saskatchewan men. My party now consisted of M'Kay, M'Beath, Matheson, Short, Toma and Duncan, — who formed an excellent crew for the *Golden Era*. Whisky, alas! had deserted us, preferring ignoble ease at the Fort to our good society: soon would he regret his short-sighted selfishness, when compelled to the old toilsome sleigh-work under the tormentor's lash.

October 18th.—‘Heavy snowstorm at night. Sleet and snow, with high north-west wind, continued till late in the afternoon. It was awfully cold. Took an oar for a couple of hours to warm myself; pretty hard work tugging at those eighteen-foot poles called oars. River beginning to freeze.’

October 19th.—‘Cold intense: ground covered with snow. The intensity of the cold nearly destroys one's vitality; several times I felt as if going to faint. . . . The river is very nearly frozen over: unless a change come to-night we shall be ice-bound, and have to walk a hundred miles or more to Fort Pitt, where the horses ought to be.’

October 20th.—‘Snow in the night, frost in the day. River blocked with great masses of ice: boat closed in.’

October 21st.—‘Seeing no prospect of escape, we sent off Matheson and Short to bring the horses from Fort Pitt. Worked hard all morning with the men clearing away the snow from the camp, and making everything tidy, as we shall have to stay here some time.

‘In the afternoon the men cleared out the *Golden Era*, and freed it of snow: I amused myself cutting logs for the fire.

. . . An aurora borealis in the region of Ursa Major.’

October 22d.—‘Intensely cold night; blankets sprinkled with hoar-frost, notwithstanding the shelter of the tent; could not put my head out from under the buffalo robe without positive pain.’

. . . 'We shall probably have to stay more than a week in this wretched place. Nevertheless, I should be a fool to grumble, though longing to make progress on my homeward way, so many proofs have I had that Providence orders all for the best. For example, at Edmonton we learned that the Blackfeet have become very hostile, so that Captain Palliser with difficulty escaped from them, owing his safety only to the efforts of Munroe, his interpreter (brother to my Munroe), who dissuaded them from an intended attack. Having got an idea that Government is going to take their land from them, and that the Expedition was sent to survey it with that view, they have vowed to murder any white men who enter their territories; thus, if the failure of provisions had not obliged me to give up my plan of crossing the plains from Bow Fort to Carlton, we should have incurred great danger, being certain to have met with these treacherous savages. The horses would have been taken, and probably our rifles and other property: some of my people even think we should have been murdered, but that I doubt, though an Indian war-party is not over scrupulous.

'Walked a few miles with my rifle, and saw tracks of small deer. The snow is about [? nine] inches deep.'

Sunday, October 23d.—'Passed an uncomfortable night, feverish, and suffering from a bad cold in the head and throat. Weather continues frosty and intensely cold: river quite frozen over. Much depressed at the thought of staying another week in this miserable place, and, after that, two months' hard travelling to Fort Garry in snow and wretchedness. This detention completely upsets all plans. My travels hitherto have often been wearisome enough, but formerly I had hope and novelty for consolers. Now, all chance of sport is at an end'— . . .

October 24th.—‘Last night was cloudy, the wind changed to south, and there was very little frost. I am better to-day, and so is M’Kay, who is suffering from an attack of the same kind. It seems to be the Edmonton illness, which for some weeks has been laying up so many people there,—severe affection of the stomach, feverishness and cough,—rather an influenza than a cold. He remarked, justly I think, that such an illness sooner leaves a man living in the open air than one shut up in a house.

‘One of the great luxuries in this change of weather is the deliverance from having one’s bedding frozen wherever the breath touches it; it is unpleasant to pass the night with a collar of ice round one’s neck, and a sprinkling of icicles on one’s pillow. Blankets are poor protectors from cold compared to buffalo robes, one robe being more than equal to three good blankets; but I doubt if any quantity of coverings could keep a chilly person warm in these bitter nights. Be that as it may, I find that even disturbed sleep in the open air (or under a tent, which is much the same) refreshes more than the most dreamless slumbers on soft beds in heated rooms. [That is, in the long run it is so, though not always, nor even generally, on any single occasion.]

‘M’Kay and M’Beath went out shooting, but saw nothing, and found the country, at any distance from the river, so swampy as to be almost impassable. . . .

—‘Finished a second reading of Bulwer’s *My Novel*, a work in regard to which the author may well show his pride, by giving it such a title, implying his readiness to rest his fame as a novelist upon it;—but what work does not lay itself open to criticism?

‘I would ask,—Whence is Randal Leslie supposed to derive his powerful, though evil, genius? His father is a

hopeless idiot, whose own father appears to have been of the same sort, and whose mother was a Hazeldean, which is saying enough. Randal's mother is a restless fool, and neither the Montfydgets nor the Daudles could have transmitted any valuable qualities through her to her progeny. In like manner, Nora Avenel seems unaccountable in such a family as that she springs from, and even if we imagine her genius to have developed itself from some germs in the parents' minds, we are at a loss to find her brother and sister, Richard and Jane, so absolutely her opposites in character. I am convinced that in real life there is always a connecting chain, slender though it be, bringing the minds of near relations into some sort of inner unison, however great their external differences may seem.

'Another remark—Does not the author over-push the notion of partially blemishing some of his higher characters in order that they may not seem unnaturally perfect? Parson Dale's evil tempers at whist (unacknowledged and unrepented of), however common and trivial the fault, are so forcibly depicted as to injure the effect of his subsequent holy exhortations. Riccabocca's grotesqueness is so dwelt on, that we vainly try to think of him as an Italian patrician of the sublimest type, when his honours are finally restored. Harley's schemes of vengeance are pushed so far as permanently to affect our belief in his natural generosity, and his devices become so crafty that his former frankness is made to look as if it had been mere indolence. Leonard is at first such an awkward milksop that nothing can ever raise him in our respect,—let him be poet, orator, or lover, we cannot separate him from our memories of a loutish cub well thrashed by Randal Leslie. Hazeldean is so stupid, so pompous, so tyrannical, that his good-heart-

edness and active benevolence melt into the clouds, and "Prize Ox," the name he so much resented, seems his most appropriate designation—if one suppose the beast more stirring and irascible than fat cattle generally are.

'Violante stands out magnificently on the canvas: there is nothing to interfere with our delight in her noble qualities. What author but Bulwer is able to raise up such an image of the female character of grandest type, perfect in beauty, in refinement, in genius, in love? And Audley Egerton, who but a master of the art could have created him? Why, Oh why, after the death of his second wife—a wife married for money—did he retire to the country for a few weeks, and come back to town "with a new wrinkle on his brow"? Such an improbable, incongruous sentimentalism goes far to make him ridiculous altogether.

'Shakespeare often indicates faults in his higher characters, when misfortunes have to overtake them, lest Heaven might otherwise be thought too severe towards a worthy and dutiful child; he also generally indicates virtues in his baser characters, that they may be men, not monsters; but he does not present these paradoxes so forcibly as to distract attention from the leading idea. For example: on the one hand, Desdemona's want of filial duty; Ophelia's weakness and readiness to act as a spy on her lover; Cordelia's pride; Juliet's unbounded passion;—on the other hand, Falstaff's jovial good nature; Lady Macbeth's wifely and motherly feelings, and her deep remorse; [even Shylock can cherish a past love, and bear a warm heart for those of his own nation; even Caliban has a dash of goodness in him, some rough poetic fancy, some power of veneration and attachment].'

[Sir Walter Scott errs constantly in sinking his heroes too low to be quite re-elevated to their proper height. Cer-

tain sorts of meanness or baseness are so opposite to the character of a gentleman, not to say hero, that to attribute them to any personage who is meant to be an object of respect or esteem, or even to make the unjust imputation of them rest on him too heavily and long, robs him beyond retrieval of our sympathy, and wounds our imagination in the tenderest part.

Nothing can redeem Waverley from the contempt he has so fully merited as a pitiful turncoat; Kenneth, in *The Talisman*, can never lose some traces of the low defaulter's stigma for quitting the standard he was placed to guard; Glenvarloch, in *The Fortunes of Nigel*, is lowered for ever by being disgraced at court as a petty, sparrow-hawking gambler; Mordaunt, in *The Pirate*, is crushed to the earth by Cleveland's superior force and his own wretched love vacillations;—in short, Sir Walter's heroes are most often put into such foul shades, and kept there so long, that they never recover their brightness,—their souls smell of the dungeon to the last.]

October 25th.—'The wind is high and in a new quarter, the sun shines once more. The mildness of the westerly wind has affected the weather; the snow is melting, the ice, though more than half-a-foot thick, begins to break, and the rising water piles it up in heaps and runs swiftly in narrow channels. A few birds, who have found out our feeding times and make them their own, are singing in a subdued way, and a spring feeling pervades all nature.'

October 26th.—'The night has been rather cold. The sun shines as it did yesterday, but there is frost in the air. Took my rifle and walked a few miles up the river, but saw no game. We have been here a week to-day; the tediousness is awful.'

‘ I have been reading the second and third parts of “ Henry VI.” Would that one could know how much truth there is in Shakespeare’s version of history ! A great poet dealing with historical themes assumes a mighty responsibility, for generations untold will be led by his genius to accept his views of the past. Where one man reads history a hundred read poetry, and not only believe in the poet’s accuracy but hate those who bring facts tending to cast doubt on it.

‘ Did great men in the middle ages, or in Shakespeare’s own day, really curse and revile one another as he represents, or were they content to “ use daggers ” without “ speaking ” them, as folk do now ? Theatres have always required their poets as well as their artists to scene-paint audaciously, for the sake of dull or distant eyes.

‘ The silent, self-contained man who bears down the world by sheer force of will displayed in deeds not words, who, passionless as a statue, makes the passions of others his ministering sprites, seems to be of modern creation in fiction. The writers of old were too objective to trouble themselves with a sort of character that did so much with so little show, effects seeming to them more valuable than causes. Modern French romancists particularly delight in these impassible heroes. They often represent Englishmen in such guise. I doubt if they are right ; for though, as compared with foreigners, the Briton works silently and powerfully, yet the very characteristic of his strength is its freedom from that self-consciousness which your romantic inscrutable being of indomitable will possesses in the uttermost degree. The English like work that is done under right impulses from without, and neither much spoken of nor thought over previously to its execution ; the French more esteem work meditated and announced beforehand,

which the worker can therefore claim as his own creation, instead of disclaiming all merit in it, as being a mere gift of circumstance or fortune.'

October 27th.— Frost again at night, followed by a mild day with bright sun; the ice melting and cracking. M'Kay walked eight miles down the river, and reports that about three miles from this, at a bend between steep banks, the ice is packed into a dam, below which the stream is open for as far as he could see. It is provoking to think that had we gone on half-an-hour longer at the time we were stopped, our imprisonment would have been ended some days ago. There is no way either to break the dam or take the boat to the clear water below it. . . M'Kay made a draught-board, and a set of *men* for the game.'

October 28th and 29th.—Mild, sunny spring-like days. The ice cracking very much up-stream.

Sunday, October 30th.—'Another Sunday at this dreary place. We had hoped to be set free ere this. Never have I passed such a wearisome time. Each day is like the other. I rise soon after the sun, then breakfast on cold ham, then read or think till mid-day; then dine on beef either fresh or dried, then read or think till dusk (about half-past four o'clock, I suppose, my watch is not going); then the lovely star Capella appears, and I look at it and think of many things; then Cassiopeia begins to shine, and soon all the stars are in their places, each reminding me of some dear friend with whom I associate it. Then comes supper—cold ham and tea; then a long time of restless thinking, till Aldebaran and the Pleiades have passed the large tent [opposite mine], and the Pointers lean from east to west, and Arcturus is below the horizon; and then to bed, "to sleep, perchance to dream," perchance to toss wearily from side to side for many a tedious hour.'

October 31st.—‘Took my rifle, and walked some five or six miles down the river. Found everything as M’Kay had reported on Thursday—ice closing the stream for about three miles below our camp, and then a clear channel as far as the eye can reach. Saw no game and no fresh tracks, and got very tired walking in the deep snow.’ . .

November 1st.—‘Deliverance at last,—thank God! Almost in despair; and too weary to read, or do anything, I lay down about mid-day and tried to sleep; but my drowsiness was quickly dispelled by the welcome sound of a shot, soon followed by another, and, in a few minutes, Matheson, Kline, Macdonald (a Company’s man), and Komenakoos (a famous Indian hunter), came riding in, bringing with them sixteen horses from Fort Pitt.

‘Matheson and Short had had a severe journey on foot, through snow knee-deep for most of the way. The frozen crust had cut nearly all the skin off Short’s legs below the knees, causing him great suffering. They did not reach Fort Pitt till the sixth day, and during the last three days had no food.’ [Yet (as it was afterwards told me) these gallant fellows made no complaints of hunger on arriving at the Fort, but talked in the most cheerful manner about other things, until asked by Mr. Chastellain if they would have something to eat. They kept themselves warm at night, by partly moving their fire after it had burned an hour or two, and lying down in the ashes as soon as the place was sufficiently cooled.]

‘It seems that we are not more than a day’s march from Edmonton, being twenty miles above the in-fall of White Mud Creek, a considerable stream that joins the river on this, its northern, side.

‘Truly if hope deferred makes the heart sick, hope satis-

fied cures the sickness. Before our friends arrived I felt actually ill, but their coming gave me the best appetite for dinner I have had for many a weary day.'

November 2d.—'During the night there was a change on the beautiful weather of the last ten days, and an east wind brought snow in its stead. We started at 10 A.M. in the face of a storm, and rode for some hours against snow and bitter wind. In the afternoon the snow left off, but the cold continued. We camped a few miles beyond White Mud Creek; it was an uncomfortable camp, for shifting winds blew the smoke continually into my tent. The river is quite closed near this—[the open water seen by M'Kay and myself did not extend very far.]'

November 3d.—'Started at daybreak and rode till ten o'clock. Agonisingly cold yesterday and to-day; our beards were hung with icicles; we might have sat for portraits of the Genius of winter. Rather less cold in the afternoon, perhaps we felt it less, having fed. Camped near a considerable piece of water called by the Indians "The Spot-on-a-Saddle Lake." At sunset it began snowing again.

'During the height of the cold the thought occurred to me—Why am I enduring this? For pleasure—was the only reply, and the idea seemed so absurd that I laughed myself warm. Then as circulation returned, I remembered that I was taking a lesson in that most valuable of human studies—the art of Endurance: an art the poor learn perforce, and the rich do well to teach themselves—though truly they have their own trials too, in a different fashion.

I often think of the story of an officer who was so anxious to harden himself before a campaign against the Caffres, that he used to leave his comfortable quarters, and sleep uncovered in the open air during the worst of weather

the end was, that when marching orders came he was too rheumatic to go with his regiment. So, in life, we are apt to doctor our souls so much with medicines of our own mixing, that when Providence gives us our regular allowance of affliction-physic we have not vigour enough to swallow it with resignation or benefit by its power, and sink into despondency, instead of finding our strength "renewed like the eagle's."

'Nevertheless, that training of the soul of which bodily fasts were the symbol, that rending of hearts of which rending of garments was the type, is an unquestionable duty—only not too much of it, for any sake!'

November 4th.—'Fine day—turned cold in the evening. Made a good march, starting before sunrise, and camping long after sunset.'

November 5th.—'Intensely cold morning, an east wind driving particles of frozen snow against our faces. Certainly I shall "remember, remember, the 5th of November," for such cold I never felt in my life. It got a little better in the afternoon. The sun was shining brightly all day in a cloudless sky, but his beams seemed as cold as the icy wind. [We had nothing better than our autumn clothing—about what one would wear on a cool October day at home—for, expecting to get to Fort Carlton before the cold began, we had meant to make our winter outfit there. We were all dressed, in fact, in our Rocky Mountains' garb, except that I had a tweed overcoat to cover my leather hunting-shirt.] Crossed Moose Creek, at the mouth of which one of the Company's boats lies icebound; then Frog River, near which we camped. Komenakoos, staying back, saw ten red-deer (*wapiti*) which had passed in front of us [unobserved, owing to the nature of the ground].'

Sunday, November 6th.—The weather became milder,

the sky clouded over, and there was a little snow. Passed through a very undulating country, abounding in lakes, and halted for breakfast near "The Two Mountains," about fifteen miles from Fort Pitt. Leaving the rest to come on more slowly, I rode forward with M'Kay and Macdonald, wishing to make my arrival in good time. A short way from the Fort we found Mr. Chastellain, the superintendent, accompanied by Mr. Isbister and a number of men with dog-sleighs, waiting near the track beside a large fire: they invited us to halt for our mid-day meal, and we dined together on some excellent white-fish, of which they had just procured twelve hundred from a fishery on a neighbouring lake.

After this we proceeded to the Fort, where everything was most hospitably done for our entertainment.

November 7th.—We found it necessary to remain for this entire day, getting winter clothing, and attending to various preparations for the long journey that yet lay before us.

'There is a great scarcity of provisions here; the Indians bring in nothing, and the buffalo are far off. Unless some change is made, the Saskatchewan district will become worse than useless to the Company, for neither food nor furs come this way now, while there are about fifty men employed at Edmonton, twenty-five here, and twenty-five at Carlton. It seems to me that they ought to turn cattle-keepers on a great scale. One difficulty is, that the Indians, and others, are continually setting fire to the plains, consuming all the winter stock of hay,—as was the case this year. Also, that the buffalo are decreasing, while the Indians are becoming more numerous, and would probably steal and kill the Company's cattle. They are said, however, to be rather afraid of a domestic ox, thinking it what the Scotch call "uncanny," or, to use their own term, "medicine,"—

that is, something mysterious, if not devilish. Formerly there were about ninety cattle at this place, but both here and at the other Forts they have been losing great numbers, besides being obliged to kill many for food.

‘The horses at all the Forts are also dying off rapidly, from a disease which I suppose to be pleura—there is the greatest scarcity. There is a great scarcity of men too,—wages have lately had to be raised.

‘Farming seems precarious here; barley, for instance, does not grow above a foot high, and will not ripen; nothing, in fact, thrives but vegetables. At Edmonton, however, wheat as well as barley ripens.

‘Had I the power, I should be inclined to make a strong colony along the Saskatchewan, of Englishmen and Scotchmen, *with their wives*, and introduce the system of stock-feeding, as in Australia. The Company should retain their privileges in the district so long as necessary to establish such a colony, which ought to be free or nearly so, and perhaps, in recompense, might have their charter renewed and made more stringent as to the other districts.’ [This, it will be remembered, was written in 1859.]

Fort Pitt stands in a country which is very frequently the scene of Indian warfare, placed as it is between the territories of the Blackfeet and the Crees, and the Fort itself often becomes the centre of hostilities, war-parties lying in wait for one another in its immediate neighbourhood. Mr. Chastellain told me of an incident of this kind that occurred very close to the Fort. ‘A hundred Crees surrounded a small pine-clump, in which twenty Blackfoot horse-stealers had concealed themselves. They watched them the whole night, with fires burning; but just before sunrise a short fog sprang up, and all the Blackfeet crept

out of their hiding-place and escaped, except one man who had been wounded in the previous fight. The Crees found him lying on his back, with an arrow fixed in his bow, ready to die game. They cut him into bits, and came back with his limbs hanging about their horses as ornaments. Mr. Christie recovered one of the unfortunate fellow's arms from the dogs who were eating it, and had it decently buried.

'All these Indians kill women and children in war-time, sparing none; but they never torture their prisoners as the Delawares and Iroquois of old did. I have made many inquiries on this point, and have always heard the same.'

The Blackfeet, taken as a body, are among the most numerous and powerful of the nations that live wholly or partly in British North America. Their confederacy consists of five distinct tribes—Blackfeet (proper), Piegans, Blood Indians, and Fall Indians (or Grosventres, who live on the Missouri), these being of the same race, and the Sircees, a small but very brave and very mischievous band, who are of altogether different race and language, being a party of Chipeweyans (a people quite distinct from the Chippeways or Ojibways) who joined the confederacy not many years ago.* [In March 1870 it was stated in the newspapers that smallpox having carried off the most of the Piegans, the American troops had surrounded their village, and massacred every soul in it, killing men, women, and children, to the number of 173.†

* "As the Indian languages are numerous, so do they greatly vary in their effect on the ear. We have the rapid *Cbotoonay* [Kootanie] of the Rocky Mountains, and the stately *Blackfoot* of the plains, the slow embarrassed *Flat-head* of the mountains, the smooth-toned *Pierced-nose*, the guttural difficult *Sússee* [Sircee] and *Chépewyán*, the sing-song *Assineboigne*, the deliberate *Cree*, and the sonorous majestic *Chippeway* [Ojibway]." HOWSE,—*A Grammar of the Cree Language*: London, 1844, p. 13.

† The same incident is referred to by Captain Butler (*The Great Lone*

Previous to the terrible outbreak of smallpox, which carried off such multitudes, the Blackfoot confederacy was believed to comprise from 12,000 to 14,000 people, all included.]

' This powerful confederacy is completely surrounded by enemies, with whom there is always some pretext for warfare. On the north, the Crees and Stonies continually force on hostilities, for the sake of stealing the Blackfoot horses, which are far better than their own; while, in the south, the Blackfeet make war on the Crows and Flatheads for a similar reason. The Crows, I am told, are the only Indians brave enough to attack a camp openly by day.

. . . ' The Blackfeet far surpass the Crees in cleanliness, and fineness of apparel. Mr. Chastellain gave me a beautiful specimen of a Blood Indian woman's dress, made from prepared skins of the mountain-sheep, and richly embroidered with blue and white beads. Such dresses are now seldom to be met with. An Indian, trading here one day, stripped his wife of this tunic-formed outer garment, and sold it on the spot for rum.

' This is a strange country. A good horse is often to be bought for a gallon of rum; and yet not only strangers like myself, but people of the place, will give £20, £30, even £40, for a buffalo-runner of repute. Here, at Fort Pitt, some of the men who own horses have asked me £25 for only moderately good ones, and that sort of price I learn they have often obtained from others.'

[It was from Mr. Chastellain that I heard the following anecdote, illustrative of the strength and ferocity of the grisly bear: whether he himself or another person were the eye-witness referred to I do not remember, but I know that he vouched for the absolute truth of the story.

Land, 1872, p. 360), who also gives much information about the progress and ravages of the smallpox epidemic.

A certain hunter was proceeding to stalk four buffalo bulls, which he had observed quietly feeding at the outskirts of a little wood. While, however, he was yet hardly within range of them, another actor appeared on the scene, a grisly of the largest size, who, quitting the covert that had concealed him, advanced very deliberately towards the nearest of the four buffaloes.

The bull was too proud to flee from a single opponent,—it is not their habit to flee except from man,—he lowered his head and prepared to receive the attack: the conflict was over in a moment; with one sweep of his paw the grisly broke the enormous neck of his antagonist, and laid him lifeless on the ground.

Meanwhile the other bulls had remained as spectators, taking no part in the conflict, and showing no signs of excitement or alarm.

The grisly having made an end of one of his foes, now boldly advanced to the next: the same scene took place as before, and the second bull lay broken-necked a few yards from his defeated companion.

A third time the grisly advanced to the attack: for the third time a similar result followed.

There was now but one bull left. He was younger than the others, and his horns were consequently still long, and sharp at the points, instead of being worn and blunted through rooting in the earth during the fervours of many seasons. Though smaller than his companions, he met the savage grisly with equal resolution: there was a more protracted grapple; then the bull fell dead with a broken neck, like the other vanquished three, but the bear, instead of looking about for further conquests, now dragged himself off, a miserable object, with his bowels all

trailing on the ground, protruding through a huge and mortal rent inflicted by the horns of the buffalo. He had but just strength to crawl into the neighbouring bushes, and there he very shortly afterwards died.

I forget whether it was at this Fort, or elsewhere, that I was told another curious anecdote, in which the grisly bear was largely concerned.

Two Indians, Crees or Ojibways most likely, were so suddenly surprised by a bear, that, after ineffectually discharging their guns, no course presented itself but to take refuge in the nearest tree, in far too great haste to carry up their weapons with them.

The tree, as it happened, was a mere high naked pole, with only one lateral branch of sufficient size to support the weight of a man. Even for that it was hardly sufficient; so when the Indian who went up first had seated himself on this single perch, the other remained beneath him in the most miserable position, only preserved from the grip of the monster that kept close watch below,—for grislies cannot climb timber,—by clinging round the tree-stem with all the power of which his arms and knees were capable.

Such a state of things, it was plain, could not long continue; the poor fellow soon found his strength relaxing, and, as he grew weaker and weaker, the thoughts of his approaching fate, and of his young family left helpless and destitute—for these people often love their wives and children very tenderly,—so worked upon his mind that he burst out into tears and lamentations, while the other Indian looked scornfully down upon him from his place of safety above.

The fatal moment came, the wretched man's strength gave way, closing his eyes he abandoned himself to his fate, as his body went hurtling rapidly through the air.

Now, as it chanced, at that very instant the grisly was in so exact a line beneath, that our friend, instead of dashing upon the hard ground, plunged right upon the animal's back, a catastrophe which so astonished the bear that away he rushed in a panic, as hard as his legs could carry him.

Finding that the enemy had no intention of returning, the second Indian after a time descended, and, resuming their guns, the two proceeded together to the encampment where they both had their home. As they were on the way, the unlucky hunter, filled with alarm in anticipating the ridicule he would meet with were his weakness under prospect of death proclaimed to the tribe, exerted himself in the most munificent offers to his companion, in the hope of purchasing his silence; and he did at length succeed in extracting a promise of secrecy, but only by the sacrifice of everything he possessed in the world of the slightest luxury or value. Stripped of all but the bare necessities of life, the poor fellow could yet be happy—his self-respect was saved.

But, as might be imagined, the man who could take so base an advantage of a friend's misfortune was not likely to prove a trustworthy guardian of the secret he had sworn to preserve. Not many months afterwards, this worthless villain, as he came staggering through the camp in one of his accustomed fits of drunkenness, began loudly to proclaim the story of his friend's disgrace, and hold him up to the bitterest contempt and ridicule.

The outraged Indian went straight into his tent and armed himself with a loaded gun, then returning to the place where the knave was uttering his scandals, he took aim at him in sight of all the people, and shot him through his traitorous heart.]

CHAPTER XVIII.

FORT PITT TO FORT CARLTON.

NOVEMBER 8th.—About mid-day we took leave of the warmth and shelter of Fort Pitt, and resumed our cheerless journey. We were now much better equipped for enduring the cold, having provided ourselves with a considerable stock of winter clothing.

My men were all in their new attire:—white flannel leggings drawn over their trowsers and gartered below the knee; moccasins of enormous size, stuffed with wraps of blanketing; thick white or blue capots over their leather shirts. There were fur caps, too, in great variety: M'Kay had chosen a round one of otter-skin, M'Beath a muff-shaped bear-skin; Kline, Matheson, and Toma wore the entire skins of foxes, coiled round their broad-brimmed felt hats. My own cap was of marten, with mink under the ear-pieces—but I am anticipating, this was made for me at Carlton a few days afterwards. Duncan appeared in a white capot with a hood—so transfigured that I hardly knew him. We were all furnished with leather mittens, of course;—roomy, flannel-lined, fingerless gloves, which we carried slung round our necks, that our hands might be slipped in and out as circumstances happened to require. For my own benefit I had invented a special luxury, consisting of a pair of immense buffalo-robe boots, with the hair inside, very wide and long, so as to draw easily over everything and come a

good way above the knee. While new I thought them masterpieces, for they were exceedingly warm and comfortable, but perpetual scorchings from our huge camp-fires burnt and shrivelled them by degrees into much less convenient proportions.

The horses all looked vastly the better for their long rest; and so did old Lagrace, who, when he arrived at the Fort, was rather suffering from the effects of the journey, which had done hard on a man of his age. Instead of pack-saddles we were now provided with horse-sleds, as these conveyances were generally called. Their construction is of the simplest nature, nothing more than three thin elastic boards, turned up in front with a strong curve, and firmly fastened together, so as to form a platform about ten feet long, by one and a half wide. A single horse works each of them in shafts, and draws a considerable load without difficulty. Carts cannot travel in the snow, for at every turn the wheels clog up with ice, and keep sliding about instead of revolving in the usual manner.

The river being entirely frozen over, we availed ourselves of the winter road, which by crossing and recrossing cuts off a large bend, and offers the advantage of saving about half-a-dozen miles. In most places the snow was at least a foot in depth, but the day was so fine that we made excellent progress all the same, not stopping till we arrived at the Red-deer Hills, where we halted and camped for the night.

Mr. Isbister joined us at supper, and stayed with us till the following morning. He had travelled from the Fort in a dog-sleigh of his own, drawn by four very handsome dogs, —for whom he had been offered a pair of good horses, but he knew the value of his team too well to part with it. Some distance on the way he had overtaken an old Indian

woman in great distress and perplexity. She was making a journey with two dogs drawing their "travaux,"* and had halted for the night, when to her alarm she found herself unable to kindle a fire, through the failure of all her matches. Nothing apparently remained for her but to sleep in the snow, without fire, and almost without clothing—a pitiable situation indeed, as the cold was extreme and a snow-storm beginning to come on. Strange to say, Mr. Isbister had no matches with him, but to make up for the disappointment he very kindly lent her his buffalo robe. Indians can always light a fire with flint and touchwood, matches, however, are apt to puzzle them; probably the old woman had made some ignorant mistake, and thus destroyed the store on which her life depended.

November 9th.—'We set out in the teeth of a snow-storm drifting furiously before a high north wind—the cold intense. My beard and moustaches were frozen harder than ever before; my left eye had an icicle hanging from the eyelashes: I expected to be frost-bitten, and kept rubbing my nose and ears continually—it was positive suffering. It is melancholy to think that more than a month of this hardship lies before us, between this and Fort Garry. Then a fortnight more of it to St. Paul—flesh nature shrinks—all work and sorrow, small hope of sport, nothing new or curious to be seen—mere labour, labour, labour.

* Catlin thus describes the dog-vehicle which is designated "travail" or "train" (v. p. 63, *ante*), by the half-breeds:—"Every cur of them . . . is encumbered with a car or sled (or whatever it may be better called), on which he patiently draws his load. . . . Two poles, about fifteen feet long, are placed upon the dog's shoulder, in the same manner as the lodge-poles are attached to the horses, leaving the lower ends to drag upon the ground behind him; on which is placed a bundle or wallet which is allotted to him to carry." CATLIN,—*North Am. Ind.*, vol. i. p. 45.

It was rather less cold after breakfast, but the wind and snow lasted all day. Camped early at English River, where Wawpooss fell with me on the 1st of August.

November 10th.—Snowing, and very cold in the morning, and misty all day; the snow, however, ceased about noon. Saw three buffalo bulls near Horse Hill,—where we dined,—and afterwards a band of about twenty. I tried an approach on foot, while two of the men went round on horseback. They were in so bad a place no one could have stalked them; the men had a shot, but killed nothing.

‘Halted at Turtle River, after a very short march. In the wood which sheltered our camp we found a platform on which a quantity of buffalo meat had been stored by Indians, or half-breed hunters, and from this we took enough for supper,—according to the rule of the country, which is the same as that of the old Scotch gooseberry-garden—“Eat what ye can, but pouch nane.”’

November 11th.—A fine day, clear and sunny in the afternoon. Dined a few miles beyond White Mud Lake, which we crossed on the ice. Little did I think, during the pleasant Sunday passed by us on the banks of this lake last August, that we should come homewards riding our horses upon the surface of those waters, which I then beheld gleaming under the powerful rays of the summer sun, and never expected to look upon again.

‘It is astonishing how winter transforms an uncultivated country. There are no houses and fences to serve as landmarks, and divide the snowy waste; all that lovely colouring of trees, grass, and water, which in the genial months of the year lends charm and variety to the scene, is hidden and obliterated under a garment of weary whiteness. The plains are mere heaps of snow, dotted with brown spots where naked clumps of poplar brush uplift their heads,

and the lakes are only distinguishable by the absence of bushes, and by the greater smoothness of their surface.

'In the evening we reached Jack-fish Lake, and marched on the ice, keeping always close to the shore. This lake is bordered by hills on the northern side, so that even now it is picturesque; in summer it is very beautiful.

'We camped about sundown,—the sun setting in a clear sky, and the moon rising full-orbed, out of a purple and orange cloud, over the low mountains of the lake.

'Yesterday we found a little Indian dog beside a deserted camp,—very nearly starved. It followed us, and we fed it and treated it kindly. Poor wretch, she can hardly keep up, and every now and then howls dolefully. Pointer is half killed by the cold, he whines and trembles all day long.' [We made him a blanket-coat to cover his thin and delicate skin, but he constantly twisted it and entangled his legs, so we were obliged to take it away. He got safely, however, to the journey's end, and was left at Carlton or Pelly, I forget which, to pass the rest of the winter, before returning to Mr. McKay at Fort Ellice.]

November 12th.—'Marched more than an hour before sunrise; cold intense; my men supposed it to be 30° below zero. It is sometimes 50° below zero, in this part of the country.

'Dined at the lake where we camped on the 29th of July, and crossed it on the ice,—soon after which we saw four buffalo bulls. Met a party from Carlton bringing the mail, and likewise the "green hands"—as the newly-engaged men are called—for the upper Forts. The verdant ones consisted of five or six young Scotch lads, who did not look half strong enough for the work in store for them. It was useful to have their track to go on, as it relieved us from the necessity of sending two men forward on snow-shoes to make a path for the sledges.

'The weather was sunny and bright; our road passed through a picturesque hilly country. In the evening we camped by a clump of poplars, about twelve miles from "The Springs." There was an aurora during the night. For part of the time the light swept in an upward curve from Aldebaran to Capella, and thence ran in several horizontal bands through Ursa Major, all of them ending on a line with the level of Arcturus.'

[I think it was on this day that the setting sun shed wild and wonderful hues over a snow-covered range of hills directly in front of us. They seemed to be all aglow with fire; not in soft roseate or golden tints, but with a supernatural, lurid glare of cold combustion, a hellish light, hateful though beautiful to behold. One other day, about the same time, I was more than commonly struck with the exquisite beauty of the contrast, where the glittering white intensity of the snowy, boundless plains, cut sharp against the clear azure intensity of the boundless sky, unsullied by the slightest speck of cloud. It was the very type of "light without sweetness,"—of a pure passionless angel of judgment, to whom error and mercy were alike unknown.]

Sunday, November 13th.—'Off before sunrise: weather clear and comparatively mild. . . . After dinner the wind blew hard from the east, and a snow-storm began. The cold was very great, as the snow came violently against our faces. We rode on till some while after dark, and by the time we halted my eyes were nearly frozen up,—my mouth had been all but closed long before, beard and moustaches being glued together in a solid mass of ice. [For part of the way our road was hardly discoverable, so heavy was the storm; McKay, however, with the assistance of Short, who seemed almost to work by instinct, unfailingly managed to preserve the right direction.] At length we arrived at a lake

called "Le Lac de l'Ours qui nage,"—about five miles from where we had halted on our second night from Carlton,—and there encamped. Two or three hours afterwards the snow ceased to fall, and a single streak of aurora, resembling the tail of a comet, appeared in the western sky.'

November 14th.—'A little snow in the morning, but afterwards it was a fine sunny day—what we called *warm*, though every breath of wind dispelled that illusion.

'Camped early near Salt Lake, because there is a scarcity of wood farther on;—a few buffaloes were moving about on the other side.

'The country has been very pretty to-day, wooded and hilly, with innumerable lakes, of all sizes, wherever there is a hollow. Many of them are most fantastically shaped. They stand at all levels, some near the tops of the hills, some half-way down, others—generally much larger—in the valleys below.'

November 15th.—Reached Fort Carlton early in the afternoon.

November 16th–18th.—Chiefly occupied in buying and exchanging horses, as some of my band were unfit to go farther, and those left here in summer were still weak from an attack of the epidemic, which had seized them soon after they came. Vermont was looking pretty well, but poor little Morgan was the mere shadow of his former self. I had intended to take them home with me, but this being now out of the question, I was glad to place them in good hands, by an arrangement with Mr. Hardisty, who wished to become their owner.* Six other horses were also to be left behind,—the St. Paul waggoners Paul and Anthony, the

* In a letter dated November 12th, 1860, Mr. Mactavish wrote as follows : —"Mr. Hardisty was here [Fort Garry] during most of the summer, but returns to Carlton in autumn, where, I have lately learned, your ponies were in capital case."

little Pitt-Bichon, Blond *alias* M'Gillis, Wawpooss the second, and the M'Leod River skewbald stallion.

Among those newly added to my lot was a very pretty long-tailed bay pony, named "Ned," which Mr. Hardisty transferred to me in part exchange for Morgan and Vermont. Ned—who was said to be a first-rate buffalo-runner, and had all the appearance of it—had originally belonged to the Blackfeet, from whom he had been stolen by the Crees. When brought in by his captors, he was found to be painted over with curious devices and scented with aromatic herbs, which showed how much he had been valued by his former possessor. The Blackfeet are said to be very fond of their horses and very careful of them, differing in that respect from the Crees and Assiniboinés, who are rough and unmerciful masters. I was also to receive, as part of another bargain, the fine young bay horse that Napesskes rode back from the horse-guard after our visit to that place in July; being now fairly broke in, it had become a handy, quiet and very useful animal.

[By Mr. Hardisty's orders, a great drove of horses had been gathered together in an enclosure, for the purpose of choosing out those to be allotted to me on hire or exchange. As each animal was selected, a noose was thrown over his head, and he at once yielded himself an unresisting captive. One cast, however, unluckily missed its mark, and the noose, dropping among the feet of the hurrying crowd of horses, fixed and tightened itself round the hind fetlock of a very handsome white mare,—unbroke and unhandled, and as wild as any prairie buffalo. Her efforts to escape were frantic; though several men went to help with the line they could barely hold her, far less overpower her.

Strong measures now became necessary, for at any cost her foot had to be disentangled; another line was brought,

the noose was cast round her neck, and then all hands pulled together till she was choked into insensibility. Never did I witness such struggles. She writhed and strained against the rope, her veins swelling, her eyes starting from their sockets; she reared, she pawed the air with a sublime fury;—but her efforts were vain, the line pressed tighter and tighter, drawn yet more closely by her own violence, and in a few moments she lay helpless on the ground. The nooses were taken off: ere long she recovered, and galloped away, apparently none the worse for her adventure.]

The weather had again become much colder than during the last few days. No thermometer could be found at the Fort, but reference to a register formerly kept, gave 54° below zero as the extremest cold of the previous winter season. This was the temperature one day in February [1858].

November 19th.—We left the Fort after dinner, and made a short march of three miles, to place ourselves in readiness for the journey on the following day. Mr. Hardisty rode with me till we camped, and stayed for a few hours afterwards: and then we parted, to my very sincere regret, for it grieved me to bid farewell to a companion so agreeable, and a friend so obliging, as he had constantly proved himself during my two visits to Fort Carlton.*

There were now fifteen horses in our band. We had added another sled to the former number, making five in all,—by no means too many for the bulk and weight of our baggage and provision stores.

* Mr. Hardisty at present (1874) resides at Fort Edmonton, occupying the important position of Hudson's Bay Company's Chief-Officer in the Saskatchewan district.

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CHAPTER XIX.

FORT CARLTON TO TOUCHWOOD HILLS.

SUNDAY, November 20th.—‘Marched at 8 A.M., and crossed the South Saskatchewan between three and four hours afterwards. It is narrow at this point, the banks perhaps 250 yards apart, the water not above 130 yards from shore to shore. The country between the rivers seems rich and well wooded, and abounds in lakes. It looks suitable for settlement.

‘We camped about three miles from the crossing-place. The little Indian dog ate our fresh meat last night, and as it would not be driven back to the Fort, the men were obliged to kill it.

‘Had “berry-pemmican” at supper.’ [That is to say, the ordinary buffalo pemmican, with Saskootoom* berries sprinkled through it at the time of making,—which acts as currant jelly does with venison, correcting the greasiness of the fat by a slightly acid sweetness. Sometimes wild cherries are used instead of the Meesasskootoom-meena. Berry-pemmican is usually the best of its kind, but poor is the best. Take scrapings from the driest outside corner of a very stale piece of cold roast beef, add to it lumps of tallowy rancid fat, then garnish all with long human hairs (on which string pieces, like beads, upon a necklace), and short hairs of oxen, or dogs, or both,—and you have a fair imitation of common pemmican, though I should rather suppose it to be less nasty.

* See footnote, p. 86.

Pemmican is most endurable when uncooked. My men used to fry it with grease, sometimes stirring-in flour, and making a flabby mess, called "rubabōo," which I found almost uneatable. Carefully-made pemmican, such as that flavoured with the Saskootoom berries, or some that we got from the mission at St. Ann, or the sheep-pemmican given us by the Rocky Mountain hunters, is nearly good,—but, in two senses, a little of it goes a long way.]

November 21st.— Marched at 7 A.M., and camped at 4 P.M. The country continues much the same, but towards evening we passed some hills, and crossed a plain which was rather bare of wood. Saw four black-tailed deer at a distance. Mild hazy day, heavy snow at sunset, and a little during the night.

November 22d.— 'The mildest morning we have had for several weeks. Hazy weather till mid-day, after which it partly cleared up, and occasional snow showers from the south-east began to fall.

'The snow was exceedingly deep and soft. Kline and Short made the track with snow-shoes till dinner-time. [Had they not gone forward to tread down the surface, the heavily laden sleds would have sunk too deeply.] Having no guide we got off the proper line, and lost a mile or two.

'The horse Napesskes, whom the other day no flogging could induce to work in the shafts, drew very well this morning, after a short resistance at starting. Some of these horses will not yield to any amount of punishment at the time, but they remember it, and give in at once on the next occasion.

'It grieves me that the whip has to be kept so constantly going. None of my men are cruel—quite the contrary, so

far as I can judge—but when obstinate or tired horses have either to be driven by main force, or left on the road, there is really no choice. In riding it is the same. Many of the horses have such an objection to leave or pass the rest, that nothing short of absolute toiling at whip and spur will move them forward. Then, if you choose to ride in front, farewell to ease; your beast creeps as if his back were of one single bone; if you turn in the saddle or slack your rein, or make any sort of movement, he instantly stops and perhaps begins to graze; and if you urge him on, he neighs to his companions till your head aches from the horrible noise. Very different is it if you wish to stop behind; the dull slug wakens into a fury, and rears and pulls and fights till you allow him to rejoin the band.

‘All the guides, I have noticed, have the same plan for overcoming unwillingness. At every step of the horse they touch him very lightly with the whip, about every fifty steps they strike him a single but much harder blow, and perhaps twice in the mile they “conciliate” him, somewhat in the style of the butcher in Hood’s “Ode to Rae Wilson, Esquire.”’*

*“The man had whooped and bel-
lowed till dead hoarse,
The time was ripe for mild expos-
tulation,
And thus it stammered from a
stander-by—
‘Zounds! my good fellow,—it quite
makes me—why
It really—my dear fellow—do just
try
Conciliation!’
Stringing his nerves like flint,
The sturdy butcher seized upon the
hint,—

At least he seized upon the fore-
most wether,—
And hugged, and lugged, and tugged
him neck and crop,
Just *volens volens* through the open
shop—
If tails came off he didn’t care a
feather,—
Then walking to the door, and
smiling grim,
He rubbed his forehead and his
sleeve together—
‘There! I’ve conciliated him!’”

'Those who have not known the misery of riding a half-wild, half-broke, obstinate, under-bred, grass-fed beast, can scarcely imagine the difference between such a creature and the well-bred, well-fed, well-broke horse one rides at home. Even in the latter's fatigue or laziness there is a certain respectability, but these Indian animals are provoking even at their best; owing to their odious sociability, which leads them only to care for one another, while they treat their rider as a mere encumbrance, to be jogged about as it pleases them, like any other pack, not as the master whose will is their proper guide.'

It was amusing to listen to the men shouting to their horses, in a Canadian jargon, calling them the oddest names. "Ah! pecheur!" I heard Short cry to an offending one, with solemn reprobation in his tones. Crapaud was the usual term of abuse,—most frequently with an objectionable prefix. Matheson, who did not speak much French, ended his more serious lectures with—"Ah! *mon* crapaud,"—in a sort of "Et tu, Brute" strain.

November 23d.—We could not start till near 11 o'clock, as Cendré had strayed. He was found near our yesterday's dining-place, having probably lost the other horses when they were being driven-in early this morning, and gone back in search of them. We then marched without halting till sunset, and camped in a clump of trees, about two miles from an extensive prairie.

'Much colder day,—small hard snow constantly driven into our faces by a high south-easterly gale. For the last month we have hardly had a fair wind, actually never when snow has been falling. Our fate seems to be that to which prophecy dooms a certain ancient family for their ancestor's share in Thomas A'Beckett's murder—

“—— The Tracies,
Shall always have the wind in their faces.”

‘The country we passed through to-day is high and rather bleak. There is little wood, though plenty of stunted brush. The soil seems poor.

‘Put Jasper into harness for the first time, and made him haul a sled. He took to it kindly; in fact, he will do anything except go fast, or first.’

November 24th.—‘The wind turned to north last night, and the stars were visible once more; Orion is now completely seen about 8 P.M. We marched at 6.45 this morning, and took four hours to cross the plain. A snow-storm then burst out, obscuring the whole country, and as none of us knew the track we were obliged to halt and camp where we were.’

November 25th.—‘Four inches of snow fell in course of the night. My tent was uncomfortably placed, its back being set directly to the wind,—the result of which is, that eddies are formed on both sides, bringing with them the snow or rain, and driving-in puffs of smoke from the fire, while most of the heat is carried away. It is best to pitch with one side against the wind; the smoke and heat then take their proper course, and by drawing out part of the windward door-flap, good shelter is obtained.

‘There is much art in building a fire. If you merely heap sticks together on the ground, no quantity of fuel gives satisfactory results. You must begin by placing two green logs at right angles to the intended line of your fire, you then lay the sticks and the dry logs across them; this secures a strong current of air below, raises the newly lighted flame above the damp, and forms a steady foundation for any size of pile.’ [For kindling a fire, when well-dried twigs are

scarce, pare shavings from a stick with your knife. If all the wood is wet, cut into a log and take shavings from near the heart, at which depth there will seldom be much dampness.]

'Pine logs are the best, burning with a brilliant light and aromatic smell; poplar, however, is the only available tree in the prairie districts. When dry it answers very well: its great fault is its explosiveness. You feel as if standing a siege, as crack follows crack at measured intervals; while each report is accompanied with a red-hot projectile shot slowly through the air, and dropped with precision on some weak point in the fortress—your blankets perhaps, or the dry grass at your feet, or some article of clothing that may lie open to attack.

'The wind shifted to the west to-day, but snow fell frequently and the sky became thick with haze, so we camped early at the edge of the great plain [as we supposed it], having only marched about ten miles. Saw a single buffalo bull.'

November 26th.—'Westerly wind; fine, clear day, but very cold. Crossed the plain in about four and a half hours, and finding timber, an hour afterwards, thought it advisable to camp. The want of a guide compels us to these short marches. Everywhere the snow lies about two feet deep, and the cart track has been long obliterated, so that when the country is shrouded in mist we cannot go forward, and our fear of not finding firewood about nightfall, leads us to camp early, as soon as a suitable place occurs. After Touchwood Hills we expect to get on better.

'Saw another solitary buffalo bull. M'Kay rode off after a fox, and I joined him near the finish—getting a roll in the snow, by the bye, from old Cendré's putting his foot

into a badger-hole. The unfortunate fox could not run fast in the deep snow, and, after struggling on for a mile, tried to hide among some bushes, whence he was soon drawn out, and killed by a few blows on the nose.'

[We ran another fox, and lost him in the strangest way, just as we thought him our own. M'Kay pressed him hard on one side, and I on the other, his strength was failing,—his chance seemed hopeless, for no shelter lay before him, neither bush nor hollow, only a vast white expanse of glittering smoothness. Still he laboured on, and we wondered at his courage: but the secret was soon revealed,—on a sudden he made an active spring, and disappeared head foremost into the snow. Down we leapt to secure him—behold a gaping badger-hole, pointing towards the centre of the earth!

By what instinct could the fox discover the exact position of that hole? He went through the thick mass of snow in one clean header, straight as a plummet to his mark. No difference on the smooth, shining surface was visible to us, yet the fox, in all his fear and peril, could exactly light upon the entrance of this concealed, and apparently long unfrequented, burrow.]

'The fur of our fox was "prime,"—as the phrase is here,—that is to say, he was in his complete winter coat, which had not been long enough in wear to become torn or rusty. In buffalo robes the season makes a great difference. Before November the hair is not long enough, and after New Year's day it gets ragged, and its rich black-brown is bleached to the colour of tow, especially along the animal's back. The robes are generally taken from cows, and sometimes from young bulls, but never from the old bulls, whose hides are much too thick and heavy.

'Most robes are found to have been split down the middle and sewn up again, the object for this process being to lighten the labour of dressing the skin, as few women are able to prepare a complete hide without assistance. Some Indians, when asked why they have married more than one wife, will answer that each wife requires another to help her in dressing the robes.

'Just before sunset I observed two false suns, swimming in small, nearly perpendicular segments of a circle of prismatic colours, on each side of the true sun. This appearance, I am told, is common; two other false suns are also frequently visible above and below, the whole forming a cross of five orbs. Night clear: an aurora-light in the west, whence the wind continued to blow.'

Sunday, November 27th.—'Marched for about three hours among brush and poplar clumps, and at noon found ourselves at the edge of a great plain, utterly bare, bounded by a faint blue line of distant wood, amidst which some low hills appeared. M'Kay and I held a short consultation, —whether to camp now, or push on without stopping for dinner, at the risk of having to camp on the open plain, without fuel,—and decided on the latter course, as we could not bear losing another day. Accordingly we marched.

'At sunset the woods appeared little nearer than before, but we pressed on till long after dark, hoping to reach some shelter. Suddenly we found ourselves in a swamp, of the kind that never completely freezes;* our horses were plunging about, up to their girths in mire; it became impossible to proceed, so we halted where we were, and took a hasty supper, consisting of cold pemmican, with the water we succeeded in melting from snow by burning wisps of grass.

* It had some saline or mineral properties.

If there had been rushes, we might have made a hot enough fire to boil our kettle, but with grass this cannot be done.

'The night was not so cold as it often is, and we slept pretty comfortably. The wind was south-west and not high: had a storm arisen, the horses, unable to endure it on so bare a plain, would have run before the wind all night, and we should probably have lost them.'

November 28th.—'Set off about 8 o'clock, with a bitter cold south-easterly gale right in our faces. We crossed the swamp by going round a little way, and hoped soon to gain the woods, which seemed about six miles distant; but we were woefully deceived, through the levelness of the snow-covered plain, and it cost us three hours and a half of hard work to get to the first poplar clumps, which are several miles from the real woods themselves. Breakfast and fire, however, were so welcome as to remove all discontented feelings; and at 2 o'clock we continued our march, intending to camp about sunset; but, just as we thought of halting, we came upon fresh snow-shoe tracks from the very direction in which we supposed the Fort to lie,—so we went on, in the faint hope of getting there that night.

'The light at this season keeps tolerably good for more than an hour after sunset, and the clearness of the sky enabled us to follow the tracks; it grew very dark at last, and we were preparing to halt, but at that moment heard the barking of dogs, and riding to the brow of the next slope beheld sparks proceeding from a chimney; a welcome illumination, which in a few minutes guided us to the door of Touchwood Hills Fort,—where we were hospitably received by the superintendent, Mr. Taylor. It was a great pleasure to find three newspapers with European news up to the 30th June—the time of the conclusion of the armistice after the battle of Solferino.'

November 29th.—A tremendous storm set in, with high north-west wind and heavy snow; we were glad to be safely sheltered in the Fort. It was a rough little settlement, but extremely habitable in its way: the large room in particular, with its log-piled hearth directly opposite the door, was the very model of homely comfort and cheerfulness.

—‘Heard from Mr. Taylor that we had made a narrow escape when at the Elbow last July. A large camp of Crees, it seems, had despatched twelve men to follow on our track, with the view of getting tobacco and anything else they could. They came to where we had crossed the South Branch, the very day that we set out from the opposite side of the river, and there, to their surprise, observed a camp of Blackfeet occupying the ground we had just left. On sight of their enemies, they instantly turned back, hoping they had not been noticed, but the Blackfeet had seen them, and at once despatched all their available warriors to pursue them to their camp, and endeavour to steal some horses.

‘The Blackfeet party succeeded in getting among the horses at night, and were beginning to drive them away, when the Crees discovered them, and rushed to the attack with a superior force; upon which the invaders made their retreat, and all got clear off, except one man who had been unlucky enough to mount himself on a very slow old mare belonging to his enemies.

‘Finding that he could not escape by flight, he dismounted and hid in a thicket, trusting that the darkness would conceal him; but a young Assiniboine, who was with the Crees, thinking he saw something run into the bush, went to examine it more closely, and verified his observation by feeling an arrow graze his side, as he nearly trod on the lurking warrior.

' Like lightning he stove in the Blackfoot's head with his tomahawk, and, the Crees coming up, a horrible scene ensued. Not content with scalping their victim, they skinned his limbs and cut him in pieces, they ate his flesh and drank his blood; and made their appearance at this Fort, displaying portions of the poor wretch's body as trophies. His hair was grey.

' As concerns me, this affair resembles the story of the man pursued by a tiger on one side and a crocodile on the other. The tiger springs into the reptile's jaws, the man meanwhile escapes. Had the Blackfeet not seen and followed the Crees, they would certainly have tracked my party, and at the least tried to steal our horses,—which we should have resisted, and lives would have been lost,—nay, probably they would have attacked us at once, as the tribe has become so bitterly hostile to Europeans this year.

' Had we been overtaken by the Crees, our horses would have been in danger, though these Indians are friendly with the whites, and in many ways they would have been troublesome visitors. We have reason to thank God for preserving us from these dangers—dangers we could not have avoided, whose very existence we were ignorant of. A few weeks ago, Mr. Taylor was informed by Mr. S—— [an English gentleman travelling in the country], that it was believed that I and all my men had been killed by the Blackfeet. I trust this report will not reach home.'

CHAPTER XX.

TOUCHWOOD HILLS TO FORT PELLY.

NOVEMBER 30th.—About one o'clock in the afternoon we took our departure from Touchwood Hills Fort. We found ourselves obliged to leave Jasper and Mousey behind, both being so utterly exhausted as to be unfit for further work, without a good long interval for repose. In the latter I took no interest at all, but it distressed me to part with the handsome pony which had carried me so gallantly in the Rocky Mountains. But he was now reduced to a skeleton, by cold, poor feeding, and the unwonted labour of hauling at a sled, to which necessity had compelled us to subject him, and I saw that leaving him at once in comfortable quarters was the only chance of saving his life. Unhappily it was not so fated. While staying at Fort Pelly, towards the end of the year, a man, who arrived from the other Fort, brought me the news of Poor Jasper's decease. He died a few days after we left him, from an attack of inflammation, brought on perhaps by a too sudden change from cold and hunger to warmth and plentiful food.

The day of our departure was clear and intensely cold; there was a high wind also, but happily our old experience was reversed, and the strength of the gale fell merely on our backs, as we continued our journey towards the south-east. I doubt if the Fort we then quitted any longer exists,

for we heard of an intention to move it the following summer to Little Touchwood Hills,—a place about thirty miles distant, in the direction of Qu'appelle Fort, which was also to be dismantled, and the two posts conjoined.

The country that afternoon was hilly, and diversified with many small lakes: it was apparently thickly wooded, but no trees of any size were to be seen,—a shabby growth of willow and poplar brush for the most part overspreading the ground.

December 1st. — ‘Intensely cold night. My gloves having gone astray, I had to wait some time after breakfast was ready till they were found, for the steel in the knife and fork handles stuck to my skin, burning like hot iron. The tea-cup kept freezing to the saucer when any tea ran over, requiring some little force to remove it. Taking up a brass candlestick hastily, I had to drop it more hastily—it felt red-hot.

‘The sun fortunately shone brightly all day, and lessened the cold, and the wind was still at our back. We made a six hours’ march without halting, crossing a bare plain about twelve miles wide, near the edge of which we camped, having altogether marched some eighteen miles.—Re-reading “Troilus and Cressida.”’

[As I read this fine, although singular play, certain lines in Agamemnon’s speech to the princes so forcibly impressed themselves on me, that for days afterwards they were constantly in my thoughts, as strengtheners and consolers amidst all the hardships of the journey. When the frost bit keenest, and the icy winds congealed one’s blood, and the men were cheerless and silent, and the skeleton horses slaved wearily along,—hour following hour in miserable monotony, till life was almost too grievous to endure,—ever

and again some angel's voice seemed to breathe into my inner hearing, in calm yet triumphant tones—

“And call them shames? which are indeed nought else
But the protractive trials of great Jove
To find persistive constancy in man:
The fineness of which metal is not found
In fortune's love.”

It is true that these words were not entirely appropriate,—for we could not have retreated if we would,—but they were not the less consoling: Shakespeare's utterances are magical, there is 'occult virtue in them. They speak in plain language to the understanding, but they have also an inexplicable power to strengthen the spirit in mysterious, hidden ways.]

December 2d.—‘Tried the snow-shoes for the first time, and walked in them for an hour, getting on capitally, with the exception of two or three falls at starting. It is a great relief to tread on the firm surface which the snow-shoe gives, for wading through deep snow is most fatiguing; but the weight hanging on one's legs soon begins to tell, and even experienced walkers are apt to get their feet badly cut by the frozen straps.

‘Some of the horses, especially the two Cendr s, have lost the hair from the lower part of their legs, through the sharpness of the hard crusted snow, and the frost acting on the exposed skin has opened bleeding wounds. This is one great drawback to travelling with horses in winter.

‘We marched about eighteen miles, and camped at dusk by the Beaver Hill Creek. Just before sunset the wind changed to east, and light snow showers began to fall. It grew extremely cold, and the wood being damp did not burn freely, a great misery under such circumstances.’

[The intensity of the cold produced an effect I do not remember observing before or since,—it seemed to crush out the vitality of the fire. As soon as the feeble flame arose, it lost its colour, and died out gradually from the point downwards. It must have been a good half-hour before the fire was fairly kindled, and till then it threw out scarcely a ray of heat. Our camp was in a low-lying dampish hollow, closely surrounded by young poplar-brush.]

December 3d.—‘Milder day, but snowing a little. Started late, and camped early at the Smoke Tent Wood—distance about twelve miles. This is called half-way to Fort Pelly. We have been passing through more wood than of late, but the country keeps a prairie character, and bears no appearance of fertility. M’Kay had tea with me to-night.’ [I always took my meals alone, unless now and then when M’Kay joined me on special invitation. Breakfast, dinner, tea, or supper—whatever the name of the repast—it consisted much of the same materials,—tea, flour-cakes, and such meat as happened to be available. At this particular time my own dish was generally supplied with slices of beef, cut from huge frozen joints brought from one or other of the Forts. Sometimes I chose dried meat for a variety, but pemmican—the chief food of the rest of the party—I seldom cared to taste. When currants or raisins were among our stores, Toma would boil them with flour or rice, and serve up very tolerable puddings. Near the Elbow he made me a delicious jelly with Saskatoon berries,—much to my astonishment.]

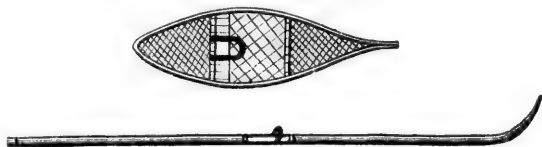
Sunday, December 4th.—‘Traversed a prairie some eight miles wide, through which the White Mud River flows, expanded into a lake where we crossed it; afterwards passed through a partially wooded country, and camped after

a five or six hours' march, during which we probably made upwards of sixteen miles.

'Three hours of the time I walked on snow-shoes, getting on well at first, but latterly suffering much from blistered feet, and great fatigue in the thigh muscles, though my ankles felt no strain.

'People at home commonly imagine snow-shoes to be like velocipedes, implements which enable the wearer to outstrip the wind and outstay the stoutest pedestrian; but this is far from the truth, for though these network platforms enable the wearer to traverse deep snow with comparative ease, and even to overtake swift animals under favourable circumstances, they are nothing but encumbrances in themselves, adding to the fatigue and diminishing the pace.

'The Lapland 'skidor' are totally different things, more like enormous skates (to judge by description), and capable of helping the wearer to great swiftness; but nothing of



SNOW-SHOE AND SKIDOR.

the kind is used in this country,—why, I cannot explain. Perhaps the snow is more hard and icy in the north of Europe, and thus better suited for long narrow sliders.*

* A snow-shoe is a leaf-shaped framing of wood, filled in with a fine network of leather thongs, and turned up in front like the prow of a boat. "The foot is attached to the main bar by straps passing round the heel, but only fixing the toes, so that the heel rises after each step, and the tail of the shoe is dragged on the snow. . . . The length is from four to six feet, and the breadth one foot and a half, or one foot and three quarters, being adapted to the size of the wearer. The motion of walking in them is perfectly natural,

'This was about the coldest day we have had. Though well covered, I got slightly frost-bitten on the neck and left ear, for the bitter north wind pierced through everything. No exercise gave warmth, and towards evening I began to feel unwell, but an immense camp-fire soon revived my powers.

'The horses are looking wretched; a week of this travelling reduces them more than months of hard work in summer. The poor things have no food but the dry grass they find after scraping away the snow. This forms the principal food of the buffaloes in winter, but their broad snouts are better fitted than a horse's thinly covered legs for removing masses of deep snow.'

December 5th.—'Started late, at 10 o'clock, and camped at 2 P.M. Maclean, *alias* The Night, gave out, and was left on the road. My dear old Cendré was with difficulty brought into camp; indeed our early halt was chiefly on his account.

for one shoe is level with the snow when the edge of the other is passing over it Each shoe weighs about two pounds when unclogged with snow."—FRANKLIN,—*Journey to the Polar Sea*, 1819-22, 4to, 1823, pp. 94-95. Searching in Mr. Lloyd's works for information on the subject of the European snow-skates, I find that these implements vary considerably in pattern. In parts of Scandinavia the skidor—which are narrow slips of wood, generally turned up at the foremost ends,—are of unequal length, the skida on the left foot ranging from 9 to 12 feet in length, while that for the right is about three feet shorter; the breadth of each being between 2 and 3 inches. In parts of Lapland and Finland, however, the skidor are of equal length on each foot, but seldom exceed 6 or 7 feet, and are much broader than those previously mentioned. A pair may weigh from 10 to 15 pounds. In running upon skidor the motion resembles that of ordinary skating. If the ground be falling and the snow in good order, a man may go at almost any pace, but everything depends on the state of the snow and the nature of the country. A good runner may accomplish from 6 to 7 miles within the hour, or for a short distance perhaps very much more. Men might possibly be found who could perform 50 miles in seven or eight hours, or not impossibly 100 miles in double that space of time. Mr. Lloyd (whose words I have been partly quoting) proceeds to contrast the skidor with the American snow-shoes.

'The road kept among small poplar woods all day. The country appears more fertile than on the other side of White Mud River.

'Wind north-west, and not much of it, weather foggy, cold very great. Between 8 and 9 P.M. there was a perfect circle of light round the nearly full moon, its radius about twenty diameters of the moon,—no prismatic colours apparent.'

December 6th.—'A most beautiful day. There was very little wind, and that from the south, and the sun shone brightly.

'Marched about thirteen miles through a wooded country, full of small swampy lakes. Some of the horses could hardly get on, the intense cold of the nights had so weakened them, while the frost had seized on their legs, all torn and cut by the hard crusted snow.

'Little Ned grew quite lame, and my poor Cendré gave out. Duncan and I did all we could to bring him on, but

In favour of the latter, he instances its trifling weight, and believes it may answer better if the snow be in a loose state. Apart from these advantages, he considers that the skidor are "immeasurably superior" to the snow-shoes; assigning, however, no reason, except that while the former never injure the feet or ankles, the latter cause great suffering to a person unaccustomed to their use. This is a weak argument, for the "*mal de raquet*," as stated, only affects a beginner: it would rather seem to me that the supposition in my journal is correct and that each implement is best in its own sphere,—the skidor helping to rapid motion on the ice-like surface of hard-frozen snow, the snow-shoe facilitating steady progression over snow of a less firm consistency. A sort of snow-shoe is used by the Scandinavian peasants as a substitute for skidor, when the snow is deep. These, which are named *Skarbogar*, are merely frames of wicker-work, of a roundish, or rather oval shape, about 15 inches in length and 12 in breadth. During my journey between Fort Pelly and Fort Garry (see p. 336), Kline made himself a pair of small implements very much of the same description, but provided with soles of network instead of wickerwork. (See LLOYD,—*Field Sports of the North of Europe*, 8vo, 1830, vol. ii. pp. 218-224.)

in vain; we were just able to drive him into a sheltered place, and then he stopped. I was grieved to the heart, for of all the horses I have owned I liked this one best; I felt a real friendship for him. For four months he had been with me in my journeys,—always gentle, affectionate, and spirited, and full of amusing ways;—and now he was to be a prey to the wolves and the ravens. He seemed lively and strong when we left Touchwood Hills, and I hoped to have taken him many a stage farther, and left him in some harbour of refuge, but his falling off was too sudden to have been expected by human foresight—so farewell, poor Cendré!

‘Very melancholy I rejoined my people, and soon afterwards we halted for dinner. Just as we were starting, after a two hours’ rest, some one thought he heard a distant neigh. Presently it was repeated, and we recognised old Cendré’s voice. The noble horse had struggled on, determined to overtake his friends,—it was the only instance of such courage among the many cases of given-out horses during my journey. We resolved to make a great effort to save him. Matheson accordingly stayed back and devoted himself to bringing on Cendré to our night encampment. I am thankful to say he has succeeded, and as we cannot be more than twenty miles from Fort Pelly I trust the gallant beast will yet be saved, and restored to his former health and beauty by careful keeping.

‘Our guide, Josey, got frost-bitten in one foot, but was able to go on.

‘Much struck by a paper in an old number of *Chambers’s Journal* on the subject of Gratitude. In most cases of alleged ingratitude, so says the writer, the fault is as much with the giver of favours as the receiver; for either the

favour has been unsought, is little valued, and is not a fair tender for the article gratitude; or else, a real benefit having been conferred, the benefiter expects too much in return, and seeks to reduce the obliged man to moral slavery—as if the proverb “one good turn deserves another,” should be changed to—“deserves a lifetime of others.”

‘Those seem to me equally wrong who profess surprise at gratitude or ingratitude. People so often mean better than they act, or act better than they mean, that all divings into other men’s hearts, either for prophecy or condemnation, are vain and delusive. The best maxim is this—“Hope ever. Expect never.” . . .

. . . ‘But, indeed, prayer should always be a wish rather than a demand,—certain as we may feel that our desire is for that which is good. How can we tell? We might be praying for the immediate reform of some wicked person, when God knew that such a sudden change would be only superficial, and that sin’s frost must go deeper into the soil of the man’s heart, cracking it and pulverising it, before the thaw of repentance could reach to its uttermost depths.

‘We might be praying for humility when self-reliant strength was our need, or for purity when morbid sensitiveness to evil was our bane, for rigid truth when we required lenient charity, for fortitude when we lacked the gift of sympathy, for resignation when action was demanded of us.

‘Nay, we might even, in more general terms, pray to be spiritually minded, when something more of earthly mindedness than we possessed was wanted for the service of our neighbours.

December 7th.—‘After a wearisome march of four hours we were obliged to camp by the Assiniboine River, some

twelve miles, it is supposed, from the Fort. The horses are in a sad state, hardly able to drag themselves along. Poor Cendré stopped again, half-way; whether he can now be saved is doubtful—alas!

‘Black spruces mingle with the poplars till within five miles from the river, and the soil appears to assume more of the prairie character—but where everything is buried under two or three feet of snow, it is difficult to judge with certainty. Some of the spruces were beautiful specimens, though not remarkable for size.

‘Walked nearly all yesterday and to-day,—my left ankle much strained from labouring through the deep snow. Had a narrow escape this morning—a tall tree, against which my fire was built, got undermined and suddenly fell, crashing down within two feet of my head as I stood at the tent door.’

December 8th.—‘A little snow during night, and the wind rose high, but being southerly it made the weather much milder. M’Kay and Josey started early, on snowshoes, for the Fort; I afterwards followed them on horseback, and found the distance greater than had been supposed, being sixteen miles at least.

‘At the Mission-house Mr. Murray’s cariole was waiting my arrival. Glad to dismount, I placed myself in it, and the team of dogs took me over the remaining mile of the journey at a pace that seemed absolute flying, after our last week’s two-mile-and-a-half an hour crawl.’

CHAPTER XXI.

FORT PELLY.

DECEMBER 9th.—‘Fort Pelly, pleasantly situated on rising ground, is a new, square, white-washed cottage with small dormer windows in the roof, and offers better accommodation than any house I have seen since leaving Red River. Various out-houses for stores, etc., surround it at the back and sides, but the Saulteaux Indians of the district are so peaceable that no stockade has been thought necessary. Looking from the front windows the eye ranges over a large extent of flat country, swamp and willows first, and then an interminable border of poplars interspersed with pines.

‘In the immediate foreground stand the remains of the old Fort, partly occupied by the servants and partly converted into cattle-houses. Not far off flows the Assiniboine, here an insignificant stream scarce twenty yards wide, and not deep. In spring there is water enough for boats, but in summer the channel is nearly dry.

‘Mr. Murray has given me a very comfortable room, and obligingly invited me to form one of his family party. We shall have to stay here a long time, as dogs are scarce, and will have to be sent for to various places,—travelling farther with horses is out of the question, in this deep snow.

‘The weather has become really warm, the sun quite oppressive. Not an atom of ice on beards and moustaches, the state of which I find the best thermometer.

‘Read a very curious story from Blackwood’s Magazine called the “Haunted House.”’ [“The Hunters and the Haunted,”—one of Lord Lytton’s most perfect and interesting works, though perhaps too melodramatic in the prophetic scene towards the end.]

December 10th.—‘A lovely day—too warm in fact. Mr. Murray tells me that this has been an unprecedentedly cold opening of winter. The mercury has constantly frozen in his thermometer, on some days he believes the temperature to have been 40° below zero.

‘Walked out to see the horses and cattle. All my beasts look the better for their rest. I have given Ned to Mr. Murray, that he may be carefully tended and well used—as will certainly be the case. There is a well-shaped bull, a cross between Ayrshire and Shorthorn, there are also a number of cows, some pure Ayrshires,—about seventy altogether. They farm a little, growing potatoes and barley; turnips will also grow, but are not cultivated to any extent.’

In the afternoon I took my gun, and went out on snowshoes with Mr. Macdonald, a clerk in the Company’s service, of recent appointment, little more than a year having passed since he left his home in Inverness-shire, near Mr. E——’s Highland deer-forest. . . . We had a pleasant walk, but saw no game.

Sunday, December 11th.—There was morning service as usual at the old Fort, conducted by the Rev. Mr. Settee—a gentleman of Cree origin, who had been appointed to the spiritual charge of this district by the Church Missionary Society. I was interested in hearing of his relationship to the well-known Newton, the poet Cowper’s friend, his grandmother being the daughter of Newton’s father, who lived near Hudson’s Bay during the last two years of his life.

‘Mr. Settee is an agreeable man and a good missionary ; but here, as in most places, the Indians obstinately refuse to be Christians, though many of them are ready enough to submit to the ceremony of baptism There appears to be no foundation for the idea that the Indians are panting for religious instruction, and that nothing is wanted for their general conversion but a larger supply of zealous missionaries and the establishment of a few more schools. Certain tribes, or sections of tribes, are no doubt less unteachable than the rest, these, however, form decidedly exceptional cases. . . .

‘The service at the old Fort was attended by all my men, and some of the Company’s servants, but I did not observe any Indians—indeed there are few of them in the neighbourhood just now.

‘In the evening we had a visit from “Clippy,” an old Indian hanger-on about the place, who reported that his brother had shot a moose. These animals are tolerably plentiful in the district, but red-deer (*wapiti*) are not found in any numbers nearer than Fort Ellice. Lynxes and foxes are common, wolves rare, buffalo never come within several days’ march.

‘A few nights ago, Mr. Murray heard his dog barking incessantly for no apparent reason. Happening next morning to open a half-finished storehouse, the dog rushed furiously in,—but came out again with still greater quickness; upon which his master looked into the shed, and there beheld the cause of the disturbance, in the shape of a wolverine, who after his nocturnal prowlings had taken refuge in this convenient hiding-place. The beast was slowly retreating, with his face to the door through which the dog had entered, but an ounce of shot soon tamed his courage by ending his life.

'The wolverine—called by the French, *carcajou*—is an animal of the weasel tribe, somewhat like a skunk in form, but a great deal larger. His body is about the size of an ordinary pointer's; he has short, immensely strong legs armed with great claws, his snout is short and rather upturned, his mouth furnished with powerful teeth, his tail short, black and bushy; his fur, chiefly of a dark-brown grey, is long and handsome, though not of much value.

'No beast is so cunning as the wolverine—the fox is a sucking dove compared to him. He laughs traps to scorn, taking the bait away without getting caught, as cleverly as could any human being—more so indeed than some, for there are persons who habitually get more trap than bait during their lifelong trespass in this world's preserves.

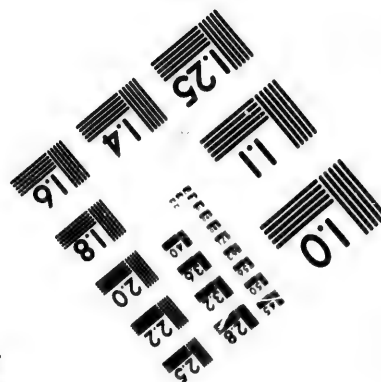
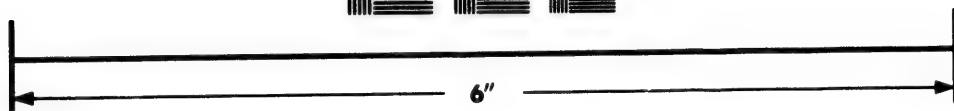
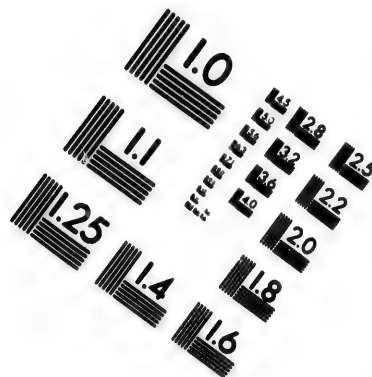
'Where he haunts it is useless to store meat on stages, for, beaver-like, he cuts through great trees with his teeth, and soon brings down any edifice of wood. His courage is dauntless, he flees neither from man nor beast, and woe to the dog that comes within reach of his jaws.

'Wolverines live in pairs, and it is said that when one is killed the other invariably finds its way to the place of slaughter; a long time may elapse, but sooner or later it makes its appearance there for the benefit of the hunters—like the Hindoo widow immolating herself on her husband's corpse.*

December 12th.—'Snowstorm all day. Old Clippy came again, and walking straight into my room, without knocking, made request for tea and sugar; of which a small present soon gladdened the heart of the poor old man. He has

* *Gulo Luscus. The Wolverine. Ommethatsees, okeecooahagew, and okeecooahagees*—Cree Indians. *Carcajou*—French Canadians. *Quickehatch*—English Residents at Hudson's Bay. RICHARDSON, *Faun. Bor.-Am.*, vol. i. p. 41.





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none of the sort of pride that generally belongs to the Indian character. Mr. Murray one day reproved him for going into private rooms without warning, telling him that *everybody* should knock at the door in such cases—"Oh yes," said Clippy, "but I am *nobody*, I am nothing, I am such a very poor creature."

December 13th.—'Colder day—a few degrees below zero. Went through the stores,—not many furs just now. This is the great battle-field between the Company and the free traders, and the Indians consequently get many presents to keep them to their allegiance. One chief, for example, lately got articles to the value of fifty skins (upwards of £6 in value) and the inferior men receive large presents also. The Company has regular tariff-prices in each district, which are never departed from, and any Indian to whom particular favour is meant receives a suitable present, but neither gets more for his furs, nor pays less for his supplies, than the tariff directs.

'Free competition would do the Indians more harm than good, for any advantage they might gain from the under-selling of rival traders could only last a few years, and would be much outweighed by the evils following the unchecked distribution of immense quantities of spirits. A powerful Company, moreover, has the means of supplying goods to a district, far cheaper and more regularly than can be done by private hands,—and there is a strong guarantee for their moderation, in those natural promptings of self-interest which keep sagacious men from killing the goose that lays the golden eggs.

'In the Missouri country, some years ago, when several rival companies existed, the selling price of goods, as compared with their cost price, seems to have been about six

times greater than that fixed by the Hudson's Bay Company's general tariff, which reserves a very narrow margin of profit, so narrow indeed that on certain articles there is a loss.

'It is a mistake to suppose that spirits are supplied to the Indians in large quantity from the Company's stores. In the northern districts spirits are not allowed to enter the country; and in no case are they a medium of traffic for furs, though in the southern districts rum is exchanged for provisions, which cannot be got on other terms.

'It is only when the Indian is in communication with free traders that he becomes a regular drunkard, those who deal only with the Company confining themselves (or rather, being confined) to two grand "régales" in course of the year, the first when they receive their supplies before the hunting season, the second when they return with the products of the chase. Morally this custom must be injurious to them, physically it is harmless, nay beneficial, for the sickness following their intemperance relieves them from the bile caused by their excessive consumption of fat meat when buffalo are plentiful.

'Too strong a distinction cannot be drawn between the relations of the Indians with the Company in the northern and southern districts:—in the former, the Company is all-powerful, and rules its submissive subjects with a mild and equitable sway; in the latter, free traders of every sort press hard upon it, and flood the country with bad whisky, while the independent Indians, roaming the plains in great bands, are too strong to be controlled by the handfuls of men at the Forts, whom, so far from obeying, they often put in fear of their lives.'

December 14th.—'The Indian who was sent for old Cendré brought him in this morning, and I had the pleasure

of seeing my favourite again : he looks wretchedly thin, but care may restore him. The men despatched to Fort Ellice for dogs have also returned,—having lost their way ; I shall not be able to start for more than a week.

‘ Walked a few miles with Mr. Murray, and called on Mr. Settee. Heard an anecdote about a mulatto, the offspring of a Negro and an Indian woman, who when the last eclipse took place, exclaimed—“ This is my birthday. That is why I am so dark,—there was no sun when I was born.”

‘ Also another about an Indian (whose name was told me), who being urged by the missionaries to become a Christian, that he might go to heaven when he died, answered—that he did not wish to become a Christian ; and that if he were one, he would rather go to hell, because there, though in pain, he could walk about, whereas in heaven he must sit still and sing psalms all day. I am assured that this story is true, and that the Indian spoke in sober earnest, and not in mockery. We are apt to undervalue the acuteness of savages.’

December 15th.—‘ Drove a short distance in a horse cariole, but for want of a proper track it swung about like a ship in a storm, and at last upset, rolling Mr. Murray and myself in the snow.

‘ There is a burying-ground near the Fort, used by Indians as well as the Company’s people. Over one of the newest graves is fixed a pole, from which are suspended several buttons, a tobacco-bag of bark and beads, a piece of tobacco, and a human hand dried and stuffed. This is the grave of an Indian’s wife. She was young, handsome, and apparently healthy, but a concealed disease affected her heart, and one day she fell down in a faint and died. Her husband was drunk at the time, and on coming to himself his grief was

terrible. This it might be thought would have cured him of his evil habit, but, on the contrary, as soon as the first paroxysm of grief was over he came and begged for rum,—"because his heart was heavy and he wanted to make it light."

'There was an Indian in the north country who, on meeting with a similar loss, went away into the mountains and lived there for two years without seeing a human being; he then returned, with such an enormous number of marten skins that he was unable to take goods for even half of them, and the rest remained to his credit.

'The Indians are not so healthy a race as is sometimes imagined, stomach and chest complaints frequently occurring, and the women being subject to various female ailments that are common in Europe. As physicians their own "medicine-men" appear to be useless. When an Indian is ill he generally applies at the nearest Fort, where he obtains good medicine, and medical advice if the Company's officer-in-charge has studied the subject, as he often has. Food and shelter too are sometimes given him until health is restored.

'In surgical cases, especially in the cure of gunshot wounds, the native doctors are very successful. I was told of two cases well known to the narrator, in one of which an Indian had been shot through the back and the centre of the stomach; in the other, a European had had his arm shattered by the accidental discharge of a gun loaded with buckshot. On both occasions cures were effected by the application of certain herbs known only to the medicine-men,—who are a sort of masonic brotherhood, consisting of women as well as men, and possessed of secrets which are guarded with the most scrupulous care.'

December 16th.—‘Heard from Mr. Murray the following story, relating to the district he had lived in for many years of his life. There were two trappers who set out on a trapping expedition near the Missouri River, one an American, the other a German, and considered the best rifle-shot in the country. Having left their horses and goods concealed in a hollow, they were one night camping in a roughly made log hut, when they were unluckily discovered by a war-party of Sioux, who rushed upon them in great force, attempting a surprise. The trappers however were ready, and each killed an Indian at the first shot, which caused the rest to retreat under cover.

‘Firing was kept up for some time, till at last the Sioux, having lost six men, drew off a short distance and took shelter on the farther side of a hill.

‘The unfortunate trappers now found that their bullets were expended, and believing all hope gone resolved to kill themselves, in order to escape the tortures they knew the Sioux would inflict on them after the loss of so many of their braves. Accordingly, they set fire to the log hut, with the intention of burning themselves to death, but the Indians at once guessed what was happening, returned to the place, and despatched their victims.

‘It was the Sioux themselves who related the story, adding that a hasty council had already been held behind the hill and a decision taken to ride off, when the smoke and flames rising from the hut revealed the true state of things to their quick perceptions.

‘While returning home, this war-party met two unarmed men belonging to an American Fort, and instantly killed and scalped them, as a sort of makeweight for their own slain warriors; their conduct, however, was condemned by

the Sioux chiefs themselves, who promised the Americans that these murderers should be put to death. Such severe measures were promised (whether actually carried out was not known), because the offenders had contravened a general rule of the tribe—that Europeans living in their country or journeying to it should be well treated, and those only attacked who were found in an enemy's territory or approaching to its borders.'

Sunday, December 18th.—'Service at the old Fort. . . . In the afternoon read part of the public controversy, on the Roman Catholic and Protestant question, between Mr. F—— and Dr. C——. It is painful to observe the scorn and hatred that pervade the whole of this discussion. How can men devote so much time to the study of Scripture, and fail to discover that such diabolical tempers are far more condemned by Christ, than any deviation in matters of opinion! The unbelieving Sadducees were tenderly handled, while those punctilious believers, the whited-sepulchre Pharisees, were overwhelmed with condemnation.

'When will just views of religion prevail in the world, and the minds of thinking men be delivered from the temptations to sheer infidelity which the puerile narrowness of most Christian churches and churchmen so continually provokes and fosters?'

December 19th.—'At 8 P.M. yesterday the thermometer stood at 21° below zero, and this morning it was yet 11° lower, but the sun came out and made the climate seem almost warm. Unless wind is blowing, or circumstances oblige one to sit still or ride slowly in the open air, the weather feels hardly colder than on an English frosty day.

'Went with all the men to hunt beaver in the Assiniboine: we were unsuccessful, the animals having left the

place at which they were last seen. We had beaver meat at dinner yesterday. It seemed to me rather brown and strong, something like wild goose,—inferior to the beaver we got from the Iroquois at the River M'Leod.'

December 20th.—'A mild morning: 5° degrees below zero, about 11 A.M. Heard for the first time that an expedition is on foot for marking the boundary between British America and the United States. The new-fashioned custom of running boundary lines on parallels of latitude or longitude is very unsatisfactory; it seems far better to put rivers, lakes, and mountains, to their natural use of dividing territories, so that a real instead of a fictitious boundary is obtained.

'Ere another century has passed, the Columbia and South Saskatchewan rivers and Winipeg Lake may possibly enough take the place of the 48th parallel as the national frontier; the Americans possessing Red River and that central land whose direct communications run through the States, while Britain possesses two powerful colonies on the eastern and western oceans, and retains that vast fur-bearing territory of the north, which, being unfit for settlement, will require no greater facilities of access than at present belong to it in its water communication with Hudson's Bay.

'Along the North Saskatchewan might be formed a chain of settlements sufficiently strong to protect the frontier, maintain communication between Columbia and Canada, and provide means for carrying on such government as the thinly populated northern districts might require. If a Pacific railway were deemed necessary, this appears to me to be the best—perhaps the only feasible—line, as one more southern must pass through hundreds of miles of barren prairie, incapable of growing crops or timber, and scarcely suitable even for grazing purposes.'

(‘Since writing the above I have seen a map by Mr. Dawson, who surveyed part of the country in the interests of Canada, and I find it to be his opinion, also, that Lake Winnipeg and the North Saskatchewan are the true lines for Pacific communication, the route he lays down being identical with that which suggested itself to me.’) [Journal-note added soon afterwards at Fort Garry. See HIND,—*Can. Ex. Exped.*, vol. ii. p. 222, *et seq.*]

December 23d.—‘Shot a rabbit with my rifle. These animals are more like small hares than rabbits; in summer they are brownish grey, in winter white, with brown ears.’*

December 24th.—‘Saw my horses for the last time.’

Sunday, December 25th, Christmas Day.—‘Communion service at the old Fort. Two Indians were present, and Mr. Settee addressed them in their own language when giving them the bread and wine.’

* See p. 265.

CHAPTER XXII.

FORT PELLY TO FORT GARRY.

DECEMBER 27th.—We had at last collected a sufficient number of dogs to draw my own cariole* and three sleds laden with goods and provisions, but these being too few for the transport of all our property, I settled that M'Kay and Short should wait at Fort Pelly till the arrival of more dogs enabled them to bring on the remaining baggage. Kline, in M'Kay's absence, was to take the place of the latter as guide to the party, which now consisted of my old hands—M'Beath, Matheson, Duncan, and Toma, with the addition of two or three men belonging to the Fort and its neighbourhood. It was late in the afternoon when we left Fort Pelly, intending no longer distance than would ensure us an early start next morning, but we marched so well as to make out eight miles before halting to encamp at the accustomed hour.

December 28th.—Nothing remarkable took place, except an unlucky accident to M'Beath, who injured his foot by dropping on it an unopened bag of pemmican, weighing 90 lb., and as hard as a block of stone: as he seemed half

* "A cariole is constructed of a very thin board, 10 feet long and 12 or 14 inches broad, turned up at one end in the form of half a circle, like the bend of an Ojibway canoe. To this board a high cradle like the body of a small carriage [more like a coffin or a slipper-bath, in my opinion] is attached, about 18 inches from the end of the board or floor. The framework is covered with buffalo-skin parchment, and painted or decorated according to taste." HIND, —*Can. Ex. Exped.*, vol. ii. p. 84.

crippled I put him into my cariole, and walked all the rest of our seventeen-mile march.

December 29th.—Awakened between 3 and 4 o'clock by the jingling of bells, and other sounds of an arriving traveller. It proved to be Mr. M'Beath, an officer in the Company's service, proceeding on his journey from Duck Bay to one of the western Forts.

[He was uncle to my man Morrison M'Beath—they had not met for years. Till recently Mr. M'Beath had been in charge of a very remote post near the Mackenzie River, having stayed (if I rightly remember) fifteen years in that desolate locality. He told me that in mid-winter, when the days are at their shortest, the sun was only visible there for a quarter of an hour,—rising suddenly above the horizon, traversing a short, low arc, then sinking into utter night.] We breakfasted together, and at parting Mr. M'Beath obligingly consented to lend us one of his dogs. He also lent me a pair of very neat light snow-shoes. I at once put them on, and walked twelve miles without a halt: but this was severe work, and I was glad to get into the cariole after dinner, M'Beath's foot being now nearly well.

Finding the other snow-shoes too heavy, Kline made himself a smaller pair from bent willow wands, crossed with slips of leather; they were oval in shape and perfectly flat, and seemed to be both light and strong. Our march to-day was about twenty-two miles.

December 30th.—'Up by 1.15 A.M., and marched in two hours afterwards.'

[Contrary to the usual custom I always breakfasted before setting out in the morning, instead of waiting for that meal till part of the march had been accomplished, or postponing it till dinner-time at noon.



KLINE'S SNOW-SHOES.

This plan added much to the comfort of travelling, and seldom led to serious delay, though on the present occasion it rather appears to have done so.]

'Walked for some time during the afternoon, but found my left heel,—sprained in the deep snow near Touchwood Hills,—growing very painful. The road ran mostly through poplar-brush, but latterly through willows and swamps. Cold, clear day. Distance about 25 miles.'

[It got excessively cold towards evening, in proof of which I recollect one singular circumstance:—I was reading at my tent door, seated on a camp stool as close as possible to an enormous fire of logs, a good yard high at least. While so close to this blazing furnace that my cloth leggings were scorching, as usual, into holes,—though some regard for their safety regulated one's distance from the fire more than anything else,—the wind struck so cold on the side of my face, that tears kept dropping from eyes and nose upon the book before me, and each drop instantaneously froze where it fell. I fancy that the work of these small icicles may still be traced in certain marks and indentations on the pages of "Othello," the play I was reading that night.*]

December 31st.—We marched at 4.30 A.M., and just before sunrise crossed Swan Lake, where it has a width of about twelve miles. The ice was rough, and jolted the cariole violently: the cold was terrible. In hopes of warming myself I got out to walk,—in a minute or two I was stopped by Taylor, the driver of my own team, who began rubbing my nose, which he declared was frost-bitten.

This was a very bleak and miserable part of the journey, but afterwards our track led us into more genial regions, where woods of pine sparingly mingled with small larches formed a certain shelter, and though we traversed several

* See Appendix.

other lakes, they were too narrow to be much affected by the keen north-easterly wind.

[How well do I remember the encampment in which we saw the old year buried and the new year born! Tall pine trees encompassed us with their rugged stems, and canopied the whole ground, save the small space that held us, with their vast spreading branches, all thickly covered with masses of the softest, purest snow. Our camp-fire, once more built up with fragrant pine instead of the dull poplar logs, blazed gloriously and sparkled, and threw out a delicious odour, while its light illumined the stately trees around, and endowed with pleasant looks of home and sheltering warmth those solemn, snow-laden, mysterious forest-forms that hemmed us in so closely and so still.

Even thus, the glow of hope and the light of contentment irradiated the melancholy snow-thoughts of the departing year, and turned them into brightness as a welcome for the year to come.]

1860. *Sunday, January 1st.*—‘Our road was very rough at starting, through young pine woods full of “embarras” which jolted the cariole severely, and repeatedly upset it. In the afternoon we came to Lake Winnepāgos. The ice was smooth and we pushed along at a rapid pace.

‘My team consists of three middle-sized Indian dogs, sharp-nosed, bushy-haired and wolfish. Chocolat, the leader, is dark red; Casse-toute, grey, shaded with black; and Fox, reddish fawn-colour. The driver is a particularly smart and active man; he can run for miles behind the cariole while the dogs are galloping, encouraging them all the time with incessant volleys of abuse in a mixture of English, French, and Indian.

‘(Vociferously) Fox! Fox! ah, crapaud Fox! (Scream-

ingly) Faux ! sacré démon ! (Warningly) Fox, ye ould sinner, pren' garde : crapaud that ye aire. (Surprised) Chócolat ! (Very distinctly and syllabically) Chóc-ó-lát,—michástim !^{*} —Yëu-oh ! yëu-oh ! [to the right] :—cha ! cha ! [to the left]. (Parenthetically) Ah, Chocolat, you wëll catch it presently. (Indignantly and suddenly) Casse-toute : ah, sal-au-prix ! (Shriekingly) Casse-toute !! (Contemptuously) mǎũvais chien ! (Despairingly—as if calling to a dog in the sky) Fox ! Fox ! Fǎũx ! Then a burst of unintelligible Indian rough words, followed by a hasty, furious shout to the whole team—Fox ! Casse-toute ! Chocolat ! cré démons !—under cover of which he rushes past the cariole, shaking his whip, while the wretched dogs dart from side to side in agonies of fear, whining, squealing, and shrieking, like a drove of distracted pigs.

'The next team is drawn by a red-coloured Indian leader, in front of two large noble-looking Canadian dogs, white with yellow and black marks, short-haired but rough, resembling some of the St. Bernard mastiffs. With this team the great trouble is to get the first start made. The driver is a man of more blows than words, and at each departure one hears a harsh voice cry out—"Survellon,† marche ! Passe-partout, marche !"—immediately answered by deep-toned yells from the cowering, crouching hounds ; then comes a fearful crackling and thumping, and the poor beasts at last set off with their heavy load, howling as if their hearts would break.

'The cruelty with which dogs are treated here cannot be excused. Doubtless they are often obstinate and provoking, and require severe floggings,—especially from a new driver,

^{*} Michastim, Michastemuc—bad dog, bad dogs : the nearest approach to swearing, I am told, that the Indian language admits of. (*Journal-note.*)

[†] So the name was pronounced. Was *Surveillant* the word, or was it *Cerf-volant*,—or *Cerf-vola*, as in Captain Butler's recently published work ?

till he has brought his team into subjection,—but when one sees poor helpless animals, who are undergoing extreme labour in the trains, not merely beaten on the body with heavy lashes but systematically flogged on the head till their ears drip blood; and not merely this, but beaten with whip-handles till their jaws and noses are cut open with deep wounds; and not merely this, but cudgelled with clubs, and knelt upon and stamped upon till their howls turn to low groans of agony—this I say is enough to call down vengeance on the land.

‘Worse cruelties even than these I have heard of,—I record what I have seen; and should blush to record it if I had not done my best to stop such hellish practices.

‘The strange thing is, that men who are full of kindness and humanity towards one another and towards the rest of creation, should be as bad as the greatest ruffians in their treatment of the poor dogs—those most useful slaves who will work day and night, almost without a rest, for weeks together. But for them, there would be no means of travelling during the many months of snow, which no thaw removes till melted by the strengthened sun in April.’

[There is no after-colouring in these paragraphs, which are copied all but word for word from my journal. Yet, on looking back, my remarks seem to me too sweeping and unqualified.* The driver of the Canadian team treated his dogs with fearful brutality, but I cannot believe that the other men went nearly to such lengths as he did. My own cariole driver, an excellent hand, could not have done the worst things

* Since this was written, I have found in Captain Butler’s work,—*The Great Lone Land*,—details of atrocities quite as great committed on wretched sleigh-dogs by their drivers,—just ten years subsequently to the date of my own experiences.

referred to—I should have stopped him. As far as I remember he was a good-natured fellow, and knew how to make words do duty for blows.

Of the remaining teams,—one was driven by a Red River man, who being new to the work began too leniently, and had to make up for it with a harshness very foreign to his nature. I remember nothing as to the driver of a team borrowed at Duck Bay, nor about the driver of the other Fort Pelly team. If the latter was Kline, my subsequent acquaintance with his driving convinces me that he was far from cruel to his dogs, reasonable allowance being made.

I probably rather generalised, to avoid pointing too plainly at an individual case,—but no one ought to bear another's blame, and I should indeed be sorry to subject my excellent Fort Garry men to the risk of unjust reproach. All said, it remains that the dogs are treated very brutally, and that even the kindest men are needlessly cruel. Not one of the drivers but made a practice of striking his dogs on the head, till I interfered,—and sometimes after that.

I happened to hear what passed when Kline gave my message to the drivers, forbidding further cruelty. They could hardly take in the idea. "Not to beat our dogs?"—they asked in tones of astonishment. "Beat them—yes," said Kline, "you may do that, but you are not to *hammer them about the head.*"

'At 3 P.M. we reached Duck Bay, on Lake Winnepagos, where the Company have just established a small post. The house has been hurriedly built of logs daubed with clay, and consists of two rooms, or rather of one room divided into two by a rude partition of boards with wide openings between their unplanned joints; but, in spite of the roughness of the plan, it is warm,—as all buildings of the kind seem to be,

contrasting favourably with the cottages of Scotch or English labourers. The clay chimneys, moreover, never smoke, and have a famous draught, perhaps owing to a bend near the top, with which they are generally made.'

January 2d.—'We marched about noon, and crossed over to the eastern side of the lake. There was a high north wind, which filled the air with clouds of fine powdery snow drifting before the blast, and we were glad to camp about four o'clock in a sheltered place among some poplars. Having opened a hole in the ice with our axes, we found it to be three feet thick.' [When the last layer of ice was penetrated, though only by a trifling cut, the water rushed into our funnel-shaped excavation, and instantly filled it to the brim.]

January 3d.—'Camped about four o'clock on the neck of land between Winnepagos and Manitobah lakes. The wind was very high in the morning, but went down towards sunset, and our camp was unusually comfortable.

'The shores of Winnepagos are flat, and densely wooded with small poplars of the common kind. They are much indented with bays, which we traversed in a straight course, passing over the low swampy promontories in the same manner.'

January 4th.—'Marched at five A.M., and crossed the neck of land, which seems to be about four miles wide, and rises near the centre into hilly ground covered with rather large elm trees.

'There appear to be inlets of swamp from both lakes, which might perhaps be connected and formed into a canal if much traffic began to pass this way,—as before very long is likely enough to happen. Darkness, however, and want of time, prevented any close examination of the place.

'Boats at present pass between the two lakes by a very circuitous route, going along the Water Hen River, a stream connected with the south-east corner of Winnepagos and the north-east corner of Manitobah, by branches, each of which extends nearly due north, for a number of miles, till it reaches a small lake where they both terminate.

'On the neck of land a Saulteaux Indian was put to death last year under singular circumstances. Being affected with some sort of madness he spoke to no one, and apparently ate nothing for a month. His tribe took the idea that he was a cannibal, and after wounding him severely buried him before life was extinct. Many hours afterwards the unhappy wretch was heard moving in his grave, so they dug him up and burned him to ashes.

'A few years ago a Roman Catholic priest was killed near this place by the same tribe. Persuaded by his exhortations during a previous visit, the Indians had allowed him to baptize all their children. An epidemic broke out soon afterwards, destroying most of these infants, and the superstitious savages attributed their loss to the mystic rites of the Church. Ignorant of what had happened, the priest after a while returned to his flock in the wilderness, but, instead of welcomes, these lost sheep received their shepherd with blows, and added him to the company of martyrs.

'We made a long march to-day, camping towards dusk near the mouth of the Crane River.

'The ice of Manitobah lake is smoother than that of Winnepagos, which, I am told, is always the case, though there is no apparent reason for it, the shores of both being similar—low, woody, and indented with bays.

'Lake travelling, though rapid, is exceedingly disagreeable. High winds are perpetually sweeping over the immense plain

of their frozen surface, intensifying even moderate cold to a painful degree; the ice is uneven, crusted with snow of varying thickness, and drifted into hillocks and ridges which are constantly upsetting the cariole,—a trifling matter on shore, but extremely unpleasant here, where the hardness of the ice nearly breaks one's bones.

'This same hardness doubles the fatigue of cariole journeying, which may then be likened to sitting on a thin plank, dragged quickly over bad granite causeway. Often were Tom Hood's lines in my mind—

"Over the stones rattle his bones,
He's only a pauper that nobody owns."

'Walking or running on a frozen lake has also peculiar disadvantages. Where the snow lies deeply the crust gives way at each step, where it is shallow or drifted away the hardness of the ice injures even the practised voyageurs, causing swellings of the ankles and soles of the feet, and enlargement of the lower back-sinews of the legs.

'There is another annoyance in winter travelling. From what cause I know not, very slight exercise occasions profuse perspiration, which in the most momentary halt gets cold upon the skin; indeed, in high wind, the exposed side will be cold and clammy, while the rest of the body is melting with heat;—no harm, however, follows these sudden changes, which in a less healthy country would serve to kill a rhinoceros.

'At dinner-time we met a man named Le Rond, one of the free traders who press the Company so hard in this quarter. He was travelling alone, with a lightly laden dog-sled, containing articles of barter and such furs as he had been able to secure. During summer he went with Sir Francis Sykes

and his party to the Turtle Mountain, where they seem to have had good sport, killing buffalo, all sorts of deer, and two brown bears.'

January 5th.—'A severe day's journey. Getting up at 2 A.M. and breakfasting, we were off by 4, and, continuing on the western side of the lake, traversed a wide bay in face of a very high, intensely cold wind. So great was the drift that it obscured the little light afforded by moon and stars through a cloudy atmosphere, and I became much afraid that some of the party would get lost, especially those who had walked forward an hour before the sledges started. It grieved me that the men should be exposed to such a storm while I had shelter in the cariole; but I could do nothing to help them, so putting other cares aside I strove to make myself comfortable.

'Vain task! Though I buried myself head and all in two robes and a blanket, the wind found its way through everything, and I suspect that the master, sitting still in his wraps, suffered more from cold than his men who were running against the bitter hurricane, and suffered besides under the depressing sense of his idle helplessness, while they felt the cheering influences of hardy toil.

'I hate cariole travelling. It is humiliating to be dragged about in a portable bed, like some sick woman, while the active voyageurs are maintaining their steady run for hours,—for days,—for weeks, I daresay, if you required it—for fatigue seems with them an unknown word.

'Nevertheless, what must be must, and as, from various causes, I found myself unable to run for more than a few hours at a time, I was obliged to submit to the luxurious degradation that my very soul abhorred. How different

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'We reached Manitobah Fort about six o'clock, and were hospitably received by Mr. Mackenzie, the officer in charge. This post is built on the western shore of the lake, and consists of a small dwelling-house and some scattered cottages. The lake is very narrow here, so contracted, indeed, that its upper and lower divisions are sometimes, but improperly, treated as separate, and called by different names.

'The word Manitobah—pronounced Mánito-báh, with a strong accent on the last syllable—signifies "Spirit" or "Demon" Lake, a name said to originate in the existence of a small extent of never-frozen water, which is supposed to be kept open by some supernatural being. Winnepāgos (as I heard it pronounced, it is spelt in many ways) means, I am told, the same as Winnipeg (the name of the far larger lake into which the Red River flows), the word in both cases signifying *muddy water*.

'Winnepagos and Manitobah are similar in size, their length being about 130 miles, and their general breadth about 30. When on either of these lakes, except in a single place towards the southern extremity of the latter, both the shores are visible at a time, even if you are travelling close to the side.

'The water of Manitobah is clear, that of Winnepagos muddy, and in some parts brackish. Considerable quantities of salt are manufactured at these places, and the saline influence is so great there that the water sometimes hardly freezes, and travellers are accustomed to make a long round to avoid risking a sudden plunge through the ice.'

January 6th.—'Left the Fort at 10 A.M., after exchanging the Duck Bay train for another. It was a pleasant day; we crossed over to the other side of the lake, and marched without any halt till near 10 o'clock at night, when we arrived at the house of Mr. James Monkman, an English half-breed, who has a small farm, and a fishery which produces the finest white-fish of the district.

'The house is small, and contains only two rooms, one of which we expected to find empty, but unluckily it had been lately let, and was full of women and children. Mr. Monkman, however, insisted on receiving us all, and somehow or other the whole party found accommodation.

'The night was mild, but our kind host, supposing us to be chilly, heaped piles of wood on the fire, and in a few minutes the heat became suffocating. The cottage, built of massive logs plastered with mud, and lighted by firmly fixed parchment windows, admitted no communication with the outer air, the small low-ceilinged room was occupied by four men, two women, several boys, and about half-a-dozen children of different ages—I found myself gasping for breath.

'We sat down to supper; my host and I in equal suffering, but neither complaining, for each supposed the heat pleasant to the other, and so we began to drink hot tea. Ere long great drops of perspiration streaming from our brows drove us to our pocket handkerchiefs and revealed the true state of the case:—simultaneously we rose and opened the door—oh! what a relief.'

Mr. Monkman was much interested in hearing an account of our wanderings, and in return gave me a good deal of European information gathered from newspapers I had not seen; so—apart from the short purgatory of fire—we passed

a very agreeable evening, succeeded by a good night's rest, notwithstanding the crowded state of the room.

January 7th.—'Off about 9 o'clock. The track (now along the eastern shore) runs for some distance on the ice, passes Oak Point, and finally leaves the lake at the south-east corner, a position occupied by a Roman Catholic mission-house and chapel.

'Wasting no time there, I went on to a wood two miles farther on the way and halted for dinner; when, much to my surprise and displeasure, I discovered that some of the men had chosen to stop at the mission to rest and smoke in the priest's house, and it cost both time and trouble to bring them away from their comfortable quarters.' [The offenders were men hired for the job at one or other of the Forts; undisciplined fellows, careless about pleasing, though till then there had been no particular fault to find with them. I had only one day more of their services.]

'After the whole were come up, I found that the less experienced travellers were too tired or footsore to go on to White Horse Plains that night, so leaving them to camp where they were, I set out at 6 P.M. with the cariole, and one sled, driven respectively by Taylor and Kline.

'We got to the settlement on the "Ridge" between 9 and 10, stopped a few minutes at a French half-breed's house, and then proceeded. The proper track had not been opened, so we were compelled to go many miles round.

'The distance seemed interminable. Hours followed hours, the dogs got much fatigued, and I began to feel very stiff and sore from lying so long in a jolting box, where one has hardly room to move hand or foot; but still my men pushed on at a steady pace, and at last, at a quarter past 3

in the morning, we entered the Fort,—where tea and other hot liquids refreshed us after our sixteen hours' journey.' [Sixteen hours of actual work I suppose, for we were eighteen hours on the way between Monkman's and White Horse Plains. Our usual dinner halt was two hours.]

Sunday, January 8th.—' Found my men all fresh and ready. The hardy Kline had not even troubled to go to bed, preferring to amuse himself in visiting his friends.

' Shortly after starting we passed the Roman Catholic church, just as the congregation was coming out. There seemed to be about two hundred people, mostly men, and more or less of French-Canadian blood. They have one almost invariable type of dress, which, though handsome in itself, looks rather sombre in a crowd,—capots of dark blue, leggings of the same, caps either of the same or of some dark fur. The only relief to this monotony is given by a scarlet, crimson, or variegated scarf round the waist, and red stripes embroidered with various coloured ribbons down the outside of the leggings. The female costume is generally dark also, and not remarkable, though with much picturesqueness about the head-dress, which is sometimes a dark shawl or blanket worn as a hood, sometimes a crimson or yellow silk handkerchief, which forms a rich contrast to the glossy black hair it partly conceals.

' The Fort of White House Plains is situated near the Assiniboine, and the settlement extends itself along the banks of that river. For twenty miles, almost without a break, small farms run outwards from the river-side into the uncultivated but grass-clad prairies. The soil seems rich, a belt of large, fine elm-trees borders the course of the stream, and young poplars grow in masses here and there; the

ground undulates considerably in many parts, and altogether this settlement looks warmer and more home-like than that on the Red River near Fort Garry.

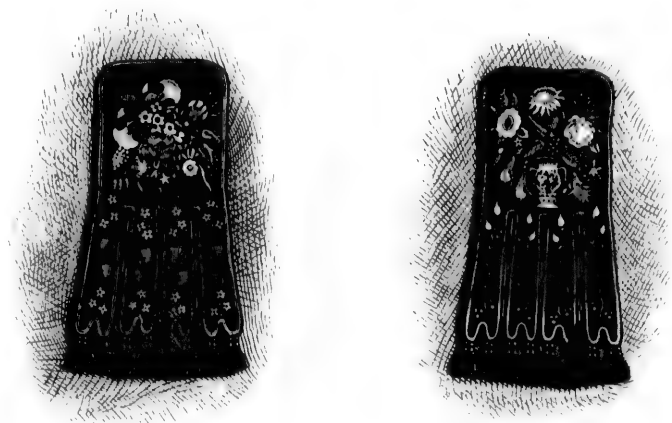
'The settlers' houses are generally plain square boxes, devoid of the smallest attempt at ornament; without a chimney even, unless a short projecting iron stove-pipe may be called so. Wood is the material invariably employed,—placed horizontally in long logs about a foot square. Neither gardens nor surrounding fences are in favour, and the cottages stand all raw and bare-faced, as boulders are strewn by a flood, or meteor-stones dropped from the sky.

'Near Fort Garry there are better buildings than these, but incomparably the prettiest house in the district is one lately put up by Mr. Rowand, at Sturgeon Creek. Standing on rising ground, and backed by a wood of poplars, this cottage looks southwards to the sun, and commands a pleasant rural view of wooded slopes and many distant homesteads. Enclosing the principal floor,—which is raised on a low basement storey,—and surrounding three sides of the house, runs a wide covered verandah, gaily painted and quaintly formed; while, above, the steepness of the shingle roof is broken by numerous dormer windows, like a flock of sheep reposing on a sunny bank. A garden, reached by steps from the verandah, and some neatly enclosed grass fields diversified with skilfully arranged transplanted trees, frame in a picture whose equal I am persuaded will not easily be found in British Central America.'

A short distance from this pretty place I met my old friend James M'Kay, driving by himself in a horse cariole. He begged me to take my place beside him,—determined to forward me on my road, though his own lay in the opposite

direction,—then stirring up his horse he speedily brought me to Fort Garry—which I reached that afternoon after an absence of nearly seven months.

Letters from home. . . . It was in June that I received the last.



RED RIVER FIRE-BAG.

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CHAPTER XXIII.

FORT GARRY.

JANUARY 9th.—I was so glad to find myself amidst the comforts of Fort Garry, and the society of old friends and acquaintances, as almost to feel pleasure in discovering that I should be some time detained there,—waiting the arrival of M'Kay and Short from Fort Pelly, winding up accounts for the past journey, and arranging for the journey that remained before *stages* and railway-cars were available.

My first day was passed in that absolute idleness which is only agreeable after such hard work as I had lately undergone—and for which one is greatly inclined under such circumstances,—a purely animal existence of rest and warmth and food.

On the following day (*January 10th*) I walked to Bishop's Court, the Episcopal residence, having received an invitation from the Bishop of Rupert's Land; this place is about three miles distant from the Fort, going down stream in the direction of Lake Winnipeg. It was horribly cold weather; so keen was the high south-westerly wind, that, on returning, though I ran most of the way, my nose was again slightly frost bitten.

[This is the feature which cannot be protected, for coverings do not answer where the breath freezes instantaneously into solid lumps of ice.]

'A newspaper, called "The Nor' Wester," has just been

established, its first number, the first that ever appeared in the settlement, having come out with the New Year.' [Thus it was my fortune to witness the appearance of the first steamboat and the first newspaper in this remote part of the world.] 'It is conducted by two editors from Canada, who, without assistance, carry on the entire business, mechanical as well as intellectual. Mr. Caldwell, one of these gentlemen, called on me and obtained the outline of my journey, which excites some interest here. There is a good deal to fill a newspaper in this settlement, for besides other things, there are many ecclesiastical and judicial matters to record, in a place possessed of two bishops and a numerous clergy, a governor, and various courts in continual employ.'

The strictness with which the laws are administered has led to many prosecutions. No spirituous liquors, for example, may be sold without a license, which costs £10 sterling, even the Company submitting to the same rule, and paying all customs like the ordinary traders. A breach of this law involves a penalty of £10,—half going to the informer and half to the public funds,—but, nevertheless, transgressions and convictions are constantly taking place.

January 11th.—'After a visit to the Roman Catholic Bishop of St. Boniface, whom I found preparing for a short journey to Pembina and its neighbourhood, I went to a meeting summoned by the Bishop of Rupert's Land for the purposes of drawing attention to the recent religious revivals in the United States, Ireland, and elsewhere, and of praying for an outpouring of God's spirit on this country likewise.

'The meeting was held in the schoolroom, and was attended by about one hundred and fifty persons, chiefly belonging to the Scottish part of the community. The

Bishop presided, supported by Archdeacon Hunter, the Rev. Mr. Chapman, the Rev. Mr. Cowley, and the Rev. Mr. Black (the Presbyterian minister), all of whom successively delivered addresses relating to the sudden progress of religion in various places, and offered up short prayers for similar manifestations among their own people.

‘These prayers and addresses were listened to with earnest, quiet attention, and a devout spirit seemed to pervade the assemblage, but there was no appearance of excitement or any strong emotion.

‘In his opening speech the Bishop referred to my journey, and especially to my communications with the Christian Assiniboines of Bow River, and with kind authority insisted on my addressing the meeting. This caused me some embarrassment, for though sincerely anxious for the spread of religion, and satisfied that more good than evil generally results from revivals, I have the utmost horror of those insane excitements which too often accompany them, and seem more worthy of demoniacs than of devout Christians or humble penitents.

‘To avoid acting as an inverted Balaam—brought in to bless and cursing “altogether”—was difficult, but life is full of such difficulties to men who are not partizans,—Gallios, Gamaliels, Laodiceans, or citizens of Meroz, according to one party; Korahs and Dathans, Jeroboams, Diotrepheses, Sadducees, according to the other. To bring discord into a special meeting is an indiscretion; to misrepresent one’s belief is a crime. Remembering this, and striving to avoid offence on either side, I began. After a few sentences in reference to the Bishop’s remarks, I gave some details of the religious movement in Scotland, praising the good I knew to have been effected by such means. I then proceeded to say,

that the leading newspapers,—whose hostility to revivals had just been severely commented on,—were far too shrewd to run counter to the opinion of the majority of the educated classes, and, this admitted, that it was only fair to suppose that evils accompanied those widespread fervours, which ought not to be charged against religion itself, nay, which sprang from tendencies directly opposed to the principles of the New Testament.

‘Two principal sources of error I thought might be discovered. The first,—that ordinary selfish habit which leads men to look inwards instead of outwards, inducing them to agonies of horror at the weakness and wickedness of their own hearts and at Satan’s strength, and of terror at the thought of Divine vengeance, thus often causing fearful paroxysms expressed in convulsive words and acts; whereas the penitent ought to look outwards towards God, with absolute confidence in His love and assurances of pardon, considerations which lead to holy calm, not to howls and cries, weepings, and wailings and teeth-gnashings, only suitable to hell.

‘The second,—the common tendency to make religion a thing by itself, quite distinct from daily life; so that a man will impatiently leave his honest labour in order to begin some devotional exercises, instead of remembering that all acts ought to be so consecrated to religion that the meanest occupation becomes a holy sacrifice to God:—even as George Herbert says—speaking of doing all to God’s glory—

“A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine :
Who sweeps a room as for thy laws
Makes that, and the action, fine.”—(*The Elisir*, ver. 5.)

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Erroneous views in this respect cause religion to seem gloomy, selfish, and ridiculous; the irreligious are made hostile, and the waverers become indifferent.

‘These remarks of mine (of which I only give the substance, having been called on for a speech unawares) seemed to be approved of, but I doubt if their tendency was at all generally understood.’

[The Bishop was good enough to claim me as a brother-missionary on account of the passages of Scripture I had written out for the Assiniboines, who had been represented to me as ignorant of all but the outlines of Christianity, long isolated from teachers, and anxious for further religious guidance.

A newspaper paragraph (adapted from the *Nor' Wester*) relative to this subject, was afterwards forwarded to me by the Rev. Mr. Woolsey (the Wesleyan missionary I had the pleasure of meeting at Fort Edmonton) with a letter which opened my eyes to the mistake I had been led into,—probably through misunderstanding on the part of John M'Kay, who being but imperfectly enabled to communicate with the Assiniboines, had perhaps exaggerated some remark about their distance from teachers and desire for further instruction. Of hypocrisy or deceitfulness I entirely acquit these poor and honest Indians, nor can I doubt that M'Kay, as usual, interpreted to the best of his power.

Mr. Woolsey's letter is so interesting that I have been unable to resist quoting much more from it than the short extract which mere justice requires: under all the circumstances, I trust he will pardon me for doing so without obtaining his previous sanction. The letter referred to will be found in the Appendix.]

January 13th.—‘The funeral of poor Mr. Mackenzie

took place to-day. He was in charge at Pembina when I passed in May, and afterwards at the new station at Buffalo River, half-way to Crow-wing.

‘Some days ago he left that post, having to take charge of a party for Fort Garry. Provisions ran short soon after their departure, so he volunteered to go on alone to Pembina, about forty miles distant, to get assistance. Expecting to arrive there in one day, he took little with him, neither axe nor bedding, only a small piece of pemmican and a few matches. The weather was severe and a snowstorm came on; after walking some twenty miles he lost the track, and wandered helplessly in the woods for three days. A party on their way from Fort Garry found him lying dead, hard frozen. Apparently he had been aware of his approaching fate, and had calmly laid himself down to meet it, placing a pine branch under his head for a pillow. Thus died a man experienced in travelling, one born and bred in the settlement;—a sad proof of the danger of a solitary journey during winter in this terribly rigorous climate.

‘The funeral was well attended, the deceased having many relations and many friends. After a short address from the Bishop, the coffin was removed from its temporary resting-place; then, followed by a long line of mourners, it was borne sixteen miles to a burying-ground near the Lower Fort.’

Sunday, January 15th.—‘Trifling snow showers in the morning, but the weather continued mild. There was a sudden change in that direction on Friday, and at noon yesterday the thermometer was 8° above freezing point. Everyone agreed in informing me that this had been the severest winter ever known in the district.

‘Went to the service at the Bishop’s church. The

sermon was chiefly in reference to poor Mr. Mackenzie's death. There was said to be an unusually numerous congregation, yet, notwithstanding, the church had a very empty appearance,—partly because it is too large at any rate, partly because the majority of the Scotch settlers in the immediate neighbourhood are Presbyterians, who have left off attending the Episcopal services since obtaining a minister of their own—the Rev. Mr. Black, of the Free Church of Scotland, who a few years ago began his useful and highly esteemed ministrations.'

January 16th.—'There was a trial to-day which excited great interest. An information had been laid against Magnus Linklater, the Company's storekeeper, for selling rum to a drunken man; and, had the charge been proved, the Company would have been subjected to a fine of £10, and deprived of their license till midsummer. Witnesses being examined, it soon became evident that the accuser was mistaken,—though his motives were believed honest,—and Magnus was acquitted, much to the delight of the community, who would have been highly inconvenienced by a restraint on the Company's sales.

'The laws against selling spirits to Indians are very strictly enforced. Forfeiture of license and a £10 fine for each offence are rigorously imposed if the least drop of either spirits or beer is sold to one of pure Indian blood. This regulation appears to work well, drunken Indians, who used to be constantly troublesome, being now hardly ever seen; but the spirit dealers are in a difficult position, importuned for liquor by the Indians, who often disguise themselves and make their applications in French (which they sometimes speak fluently), and closely watched by their neighbours, who are anxious to gain the informer's reward of £5 on each

proved case. Spite of these difficulties the spirit trade is said to be enormously lucrative, and such it will continue till the vice of drunkenness becomes less prevalent in the district than it now unhappily is.

‘In an agricultural conversation to-day, it was stated to me that cattle have much trouble in getting food in summer, the ground being so broken up with swamps as to cause them many miles of daily wandering in search of pasturage. Inquiring if the drainage of these marshes would be possible, I was told that in itself it was the easiest thing in the world, my informant having dried a large tract by a single open drain some 900 yards long, expecting also to make an extensive improvement by carrying this work two miles farther. The drain was not more than two feet wide, by a foot and a half in depth, which is sufficient in this deep, soft soil, when the floods of a single spring-time will enlarge a small trench into a wide and deep watercourse; in proof of which it was mentioned that a cow had been drowned in the drain just referred to before it had been a year open. The unwillingness of the people to labour at such work is the great obstacle to carrying out drainage operations.

‘Cattle are fed on hay during the winter, but little care seems to be taken of them at any time. The Company grow turnips near Lower Fort Garry, but the settlers seldom do so, disliking the trouble necessary to rear a good crop. Wheat flourishes here, though apt to be injured by late frosts; it is considered by the Scotch to be superior in yield and quality to that grown in their native country. Barley also succeeds well, but oats do not thrive.

‘There is a great want of wood, even for fuel. What is used for building purposes is rafted down the Red River; no considerable supply however is believed to exist.

'Labour is scarce, owing to the demand for voyageurs by land and water, which carries off a large proportion of the able-bodied young men. Moreover, there is reason to doubt if much aptitude for labour belongs to the constitution of the native-born inhabitants, especially those of French origin. As a rule the French half-breed is said to dislike continuous work. No man will labour more cheerfully and gallantly in the severe toils of the voyageur's calling, but these efforts are of short duration, and when they are ended his chief desire is to do nothing but eat, drink, smoke, and be merry,—all of them acts in which he greatly excels.

'Though there is much general resemblance, the English, or rather Scottish, half-breeds differ considerably from those of French origin both in looks and character; the former often possessing the fair hair and other physical characteristics of a northern race, while in disposition they are more industrious and more actuated by a sense of duty,—for though the word "devoir" is frequently on the lips of the semi-Frenchman, the principle of "devoir" is not so strong in their hearts as the impulses of passion or caprice.

'I cannot think so ill of the half-breed population as most writers appear to do. Physically they are a fine race, tall, straight, and well proportioned, lightly formed but strong, and extremely active and enduring. Their chests, shoulders, and waists are of that symmetrical shape so seldom found among the broad-waisted, short-necked English, or the flat-chested, long-necked Scotch; their legs are generally extremely straight, and of those lengthened proportions which, when caricatured, tend rather towards the knock-knee than approach the bow.

'Their feet are high in the instep; and the long heel with large back-sinew, high outwards-expanded calf, and

large knee, which accompany a flat foot, are, I think, never to be seen among them, nor indeed among the pure Indians. This form, with its modifications, is more common in Scotland than England; possibly mountainous countries cause its development, for it is one better fitted for ascent than for graceful movement on level ground.

‘In countenance the half-breed is swarthy, with dark hair and eyes; his features are often good and aquiline in character, but sometimes they are coarse,—though invariably well proportioned, and utterly removed from the baboon jaw and flat nose of the Old World savage. With some cleverness and cheerfulness, their faces generally betray a certain moodiness of temper; neither the frank self-reliant generosity of the English countenance, nor the sagacious honest respectability of the Scottish, are commonly stamped on the aspect of these men, at once more meditative and more impulsive.

‘Too many at home have formed a false idea of the half-breeds, imagining them to be a race little removed from barbarians in habits and appearance. They are supposed to be copper-coloured men, going about imperfectly clothed and grotesquely ornamented, obeying their chiefs, and yielding neither respect nor obedience to the laws.’ Doubtless there are some children of white fathers, who, left with their mothers, have been brought up in Indian camps, and have little of the European about them—not even the language; but the Red River half-breeds are in a totally different condition. Their mode of dress is simply that universal in the country—which I have already tried to describe,—their appearance so little reveals their origin that I doubt if a half-breed, dressed and educated like an Englishman, would seem at all remarkable in London society. They build and farm like other people, they go to church and to

courts of law, they recognise no chiefs (except when they elect a leader for their great hunting expeditions), and in all respects they are like civilised men, not more uneducated, immoral, or disorderly, than many communities in the Old World.

‘The Scottish settlers are a considerable and very thriving body. Their farms (in this quarter at least) are entirely on the western side of the Red River, where also stand the Fort and the Protestant churches; the French and French half-breeds occupy the eastern side, and their large cathedral, with its two horn-like little steeples,* and the comfortable-looking adjacent establishment of the nuns, are as conspicuous as Fort Garry itself, opposite to which they hold their place, close beside the farther bank of the stream.

‘In population the whole settlement, including White Horse Plains, does not much exceed 7000,—the common estimate, 10,000, being a great exaggeration,—and this number is almost equally divided between Protestants and Roman Catholics, with a trifling majority of the former. This calculation, I am informed, shows also with much accuracy the division of the races, those of British origin belonging to the Protestant churches, those of French origin to the church of Rome.†

‘There are not many Englishmen in the settlement.

* This cathedral being soon afterwards burnt down, was rebuilt, I believe, on a different model.

† “The province of Manitoba . . . is the smallest province in the Dominion, being only . . . 135 miles long, by . . . 105 miles broad. . . . At present [1872] the population numbers about 15,000, of whom not more than 2000 are pure whites. One-fifth of the number are Indians, either living in houses or wanderers, one-third English or Scotch half-breeds, and rather more than a third French half-breeds.” GRANT (Rev. G.),—*Ocean to Ocean*, 1873, p. 66.

Some years ago a few families came out, but, with one exception, they neither throve nor prospered, partly because incapable of that economy in eating which enables the Scot to make his first accumulations of money, partly because their wives were unequal to heavy out-door labour. Amply, however, did these poor women atone for their deficiencies abroad, by their neat and orderly habits at home,—setting an example much required in those days;—but there has been a reform in such matters of late.

January 17th, 18th.—‘On Wednesday (18th) I visited the editors of the *Nor’ Wester*. They were hopeful of success, and believed that their paper had already created an appetite for general news among the settlers, who had hitherto been careless about interests not immediately concerning their own district.

‘On the same day, there was a Coroner’s Inquest on a woman who had died from excessive drinking. The law, so far as I could judge, was almost always impartially administered, and the whole business of the courts conducted with the utmost formality and precision.’

January 19th.—‘Neither the south mail, nor my men, have yet arrived. I cannot imagine the cause of this delay, as for some time we have been having beautiful, mild, sunny weather; almost, indeed, too warm for comfort in these stove-heated houses.’

January 21st.—‘McKay and Short arrived, bringing all my things from Fort Pelly.’

Sunday, January 22d.—‘Went with the Bishop to St. James’s Church, on the Assiniboine, where he officiated in the absence of Mr. Taylor, the incumbent.

‘Several babies being in church, who made a continual noise, the Bishop took notice of it in his sermon, remarking

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that he liked to see the children there, as it proved the anxiety of their mothers to be present. This is very different from the plan of a reverend gentleman I have heard of, who orders children out of his chapel as troublesome intruders.

‘Disturbances from children test the true value of a sermon. If the interruption seems intolerable, and annoys and confuses the preacher, his sermon has been pitched in too high a key, and aimed at the nerves rather than the heart or understanding; but if the voices of the little ones harmonise like a rude response, and the preacher rather smiles than frowns, then the sermon is Christian and human.’ [This rule may hold good in ordinary cases, but one can easily imagine poetical or intellectual discourses of much usefulness and beauty, which would be utterly marred by the vehement outcries of an infant—as much out of place as a professor’s bland argumentations in a nursery full of hungry babes. Nevertheless, a display of impatience by the preacher is more detrimental to the finest sermon, than the screamings of a multitude of babies—so far as religion is concerned.]

January 23d, 24th, 25th.—These were chiefly days of leave-taking. My men being now arrived, and all arrangements complete for the journey to Crow-wing, there was nothing to detain me at Fort Garry, except a natural reluctance to part from so many kind friends, and to exchange such happiness and comfort for the discomforts of another fortnight of monotonous winter travelling. But it was now full time to return to my own home and country, to which I was powerfully drawn by many ties and duties; so I determined to press on with all possible haste, in the hope of reaching New York before the departure of the Cunard steamer that sailed about the middle of February.

On Monday (23d) I took leave of all my Red River men, except Kline, who was to act as driver and guide during the remaining part of the journey. It went to my heart to say farewell to those excellent fellows, so long partakers of my good and evil fortunes, so cheery in prosperity, so gallant in adversity, and I hope and believe that on this occasion, as on so many others, our feelings were in the completest accord. I shall ever feel under a debt of gratitude to these true and faithful companions,—with what good cause, let the readers of my book judge for themselves.

On Tuesday I paid my farewell visit to the Bishop of Rupert's Land, from whom, with his esteemed sister Miss Anderson, I had met with repeated, and very highly prized, attentions during the whole of my stay; and on Wednesday afternoon came the sorrowful moment of departure from Fort Garry,—sorrowful indeed, had I known that among those kind and good friends whose hands so cordially grasped mine, who speeded me on my way with such warm and heart-felt adieux, there were some,—some too, of the kindest and best,—on whose faces I should never look again, till, perchance, we meet in some region beyond the grave.

Oh! what a loss did the whole community sustain in the death of that grave, prudent, right-minded man, who so excellently ruled the important post of Fort Garry, who afterwards so ably performed the onerous and responsible duties devolving on the Company's Chief Representative abroad.*

But, for myself, there is not only a share in such general

* Upon the death of Sir George Simpson, Mr. Mactavish was appointed Governor of Assiniboia, and Mr. Dallas, one of the Directors of the Company at the time, was made Governor-in-Chief of the Territory. The latter resigned in 1862, and from that date Mr. Mactavish held both offices, till within a few months of his death, which occurred in July, 1870.

and public regrets, there is deep sorrow for the loss of a friend endeared to me by his admirable and most attractive qualities, and by a thousand kindnesses ever freely shown me,—kindnesses of no trivial sort, but displayed in many laborious and thoughtful services in my behalf. I was living in the hope of seeing him again, on his side of the ocean or on mine, when of a sudden, in a casual conversation, the news reached me that my friend William Mactavish was no more. Alas for this world, but not for him! Wherever he now may be, this just and good man is with the good and just, in some happier place than our poor earth can offer to its beloved, honoured, and favoured ones.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FORT GARRY TO ENGLAND.

JANUARY 25th.—This afternoon I took my last leave of Fort Garry and all its kind, agreeable, and most friendly inmates.*

It was not our intention to march far before camping, but the non-arrival of one of my people, who—through an error on his part—had been left behind, in the expectation that he would soon come up with us, obliged us to make an earlier halt than contemplated, so we only travelled twelve miles of the seventy that lay between our starting-point and the Fort at Pembina.

[A curious circumstance happened as I was going to bed,—as I hastily slipped myself between the buffalo robes, a wide sheet of electrical flame blazed into my face, for a moment illuminating the whole tent. The same thing happened on a subsequent occasion, though rather less vividly. These flames were doubtless similar to the sparks that issue from a cat's fur when briskly rubbed in the dark during frosty weather.]

January 26th.—Kline made another of his great journeys, taking me the remaining fifty-eight miles to Pembina in a single day. We started at 3 A.M., and arrived at

* I rejoice to learn that Mr. Fortescue, senior clerk at the time of my visit (to whom I am indebted for much valuable assistance), is still in the Company's service, being at present (1874) officer-in-charge at York Factory, an important station on the shores of Hudson's Bay.

the fort at 8.30 P.M., having halted two hours and a half on the road.

January 27th.—No progress to speak of,—owing to time lost in hiring another train, which had proved to be indispensable, the baggage being too heavy for our strength of dogs. After much delay a suitable team and driver were found, and engaged at a hire of £10 for the journey and return.

On the cordial and pressing invitation of M. Rolette, I stopped for the night at his house, which is three miles beyond the Fort in the direction we were travelling. He had gathered a large party of friends and neighbours, and entertained us very hospitably with a supper and a ball. Though it was late when we started next morning,—not earlier than about 9 o'clock,—we made 35 miles before camping at a wooded point some distance past Les Deux Rivières.

January 28th–31st.—Nothing remarkable during the next few days, except that while camped near Snake River, on the 30th, we heard the trees cracking repeatedly from the intenseness of the frost; a common circumstance, it seems, but new to me. The reports were loud and sharp, the wood, I was informed, actually splitting into visible rents and fissures.

Late on the 4th, or—rather, early on the 5th, we arrived at Otter-tail, where, notwithstanding the untimeliness of the hour, we were very hospitably received, and entertained during the following day and night, by Colonel Sawyer, a gentleman who, at one time a member of the Ohio legislature, had at length taken up his abode in this remote part of the States: remotest, it might then have been termed, for Otter-tail City was at the farthest point of settlement in Minnesota. It only consisted of some half-a-dozen wooden houses: there were also a few scattered farms in the neighbourhood. The

sheet of water which gives it its name is said to be so designated from a singular tongue of land which projects far inwards near the entrance of the tributary stream, shaping that part of the lake into the form of an otter's tail. Some interest attaches to this lake, as being the main source of the Red River; which, after flowing thirty or forty miles in a southerly direction, bends abruptly northwards, and subsequently preserves that course until its termination in Lake Winnipeg.

On the 6th we set out at 8 A.M., passed Leaf-Lake City (that two-house city of the future), and reached the ferry station on the now frozen Crow-wing River about midnight; having halted twice on the way.

During this part of our journey we witnessed the complete progress of a nearly total eclipse of the moon, from the first slight invasion of its brilliant circle by the darkness, which gradually enshrouded all but a narrow edge of light, to its final deliverance from the slowly retreating obscurity. As I reclined at full length in the cariole, my face was set at a convenient angle for these lunar observations, and it fortunately happened that our road always tended in the best possible direction for the same purpose.

After two hours' rest at the ferry-house we resumed our march, and at 4 o'clock in the afternoon of the 7th arrived at Crow-wing City, where we stopped at the first inn that offered itself, a small tavern kept by a Frenchman of the name of Larue. It was very noisy,—preparations for a ball having attracted a crowd of strangers,—but this signified little, as I only intended to stay long enough to make parting arrangements with my men, and engage a vehicle to take me to Saux Rapids, whence there was a stage-waggon on Thursday morning.

[As I sat in the bar-room I beheld a sight that filled me with sorrow and disgust,—the once great chief of the Ojibways, “Hole-in-the-day,” reeling about in a state of contemptible drunkenness. This degraded man was following Larue everywhere, with the most abject importunities for drink. “Charlie, Charlie, do give me more!” was his piteous, incessant cry, while tears ran down his pale and flabby cheeks. At length in an agony of supplication he caught hold of Larue’s coat-skirt; the tavern-keeper spurned him away, and he fell on his face upon the floor, with helpless blubberings like a scolded child.

Two Indians stood within, acting as guards of honour for their degenerate chief. They were stern and savage of look, their arms and their scanty dress were almost entirely of native fashion. One of them bore in his hand a long tomahawk. I watched this man’s eye when Larue spurned the drunkard from him, and I saw that there was but a step between that lively young Frenchman and his tomb. But doubtless the Indian was accustomed to such scenes, and had learnt to control his feelings; at all events, he and his companion made no hostile movement, but quietly crossed the room to their abject leader, lifted him up in their arms, and put him into a handsome horse-sleigh which awaited him at the door.

This Hole-in-the-day was a rich man, being largely subsidised by the United States, who paid him an annuity for the districts purchased from the tribe, besides granting him extensive reservations of land. He owned a house furnished in the European style, in which each of his six wives had her separate apartment; he had fine horses, fine sleighs, and every luxury his heart could desire. Once he was poor, now he is rich: once, warriors would fall before him; now, he licks the dust at a publican’s feet.

The first Indian I saw in the United States was a drunken blackguard reeling through a beautiful forest; the last I saw was a drunken chief grovelling in a road-side tavern.]*

February 8th.—A few words will suffice for the remainder of my journey. Leaving Crow-wing at midnight I reached Saux Rapids in eighteen hours, and then went on by stage to St. Anthony. Arriving at St. Paul on the 10th I started early the following morning, slept at Wabashaw, and on Sunday afternoon reached La Crosse, having travelled the last five-and-thirty miles from Wenona on the frozen surface of the Mississippi. At La Crosse I came within reach of railways, and proceeding uninterruptedly, except by some changes of train, for three nights and two days, arrived at New York about noon on Wednesday the 15th.

Finding myself too late for the regular Cunard steamer, —the “Asia,” it appeared, having just sailed,—I drove to the Brevoort House, and for the second time settled myself at that most comfortable hotel; intending to take my passage in the “Canada,” another steam-vessel of the same line, which was to start from Boston in a few days. I was fortunate enough, however, to become acquainted with the late Sir

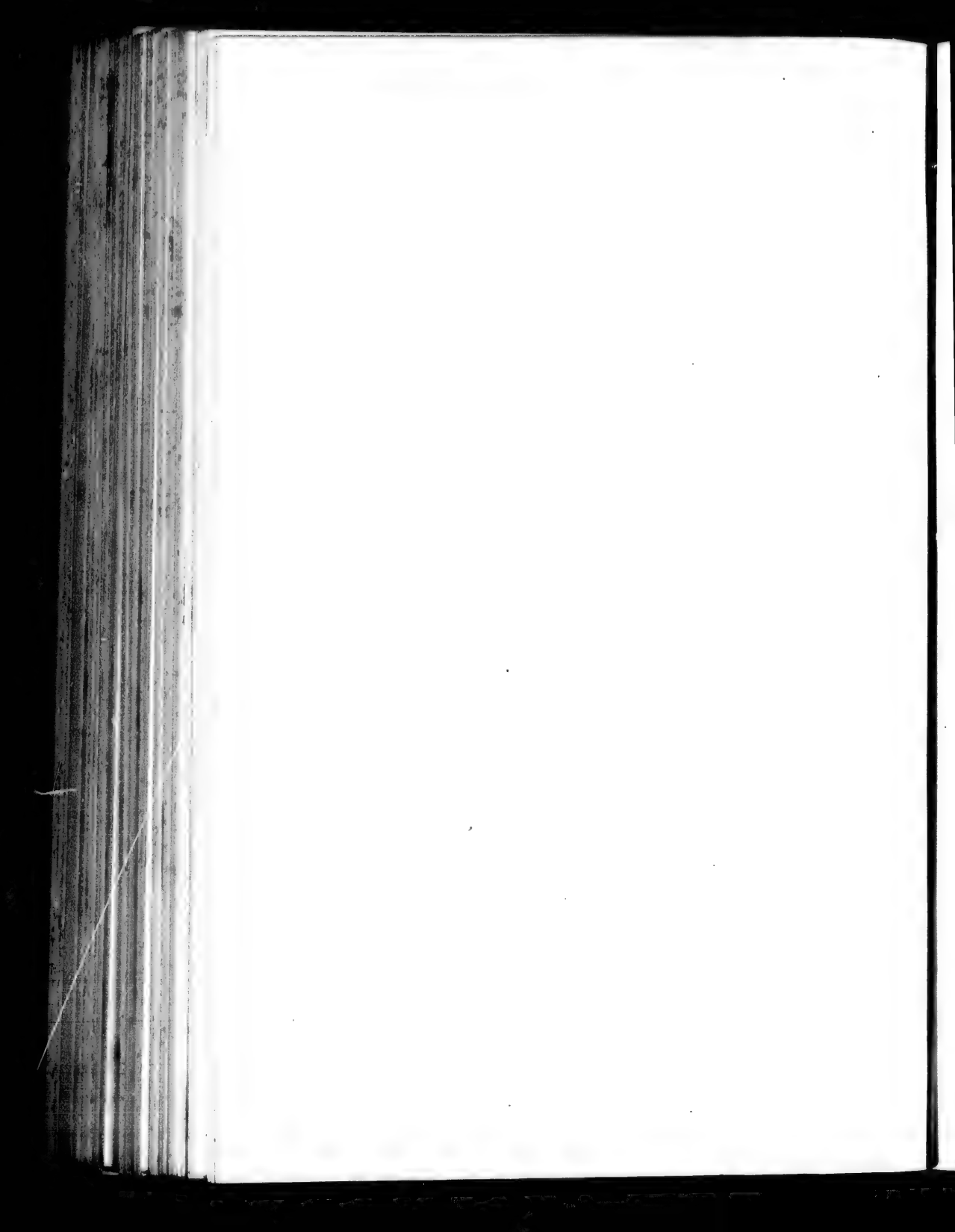
* “*Bug-on-a-ke-shig* literally means *Hole-in-the-sky*. The war-song of this chief was addressed to his guardian spirit, seen through a hole in the sky.” —SCHOOLCRAFT,—*Report on the Indian Tribes of the United States*, vol. ii. 160.

As this Report was published in 1851, it is possible that the chief there referred to was the father of the chief seen by me in 1860; for with the Ojibways (unlike many of the other tribes) personal names often descend in families. The warrior described by Mr. Schoolcraft is spoken of as the bravest of the brave. “Some of his contemporary warriors say of him—‘At the moment of excitement he would have thrown himself into the fire.’ . . . He had that way about him that induced the few who really loved him to be willing even to die for him. . . . During his lifetime he distinguished himself in eight different fights.”—SCHOOLCRAFT,—vol. ii. p. 167.

Edward Cunard, who, on learning my intentions, very obligingly offered me a passage in the "Etna," one of the Company's fine screw-steamers, which was shortly starting for Liverpool, under the command of my old acquaintance Captain [now Sir James] Anderson.

A few pleasant days glided quickly by amidst the amusements of New York. Again I found myself a sharer in the frank and genial hospitalities so cordially offered me by acquaintances both old and new, though to none was I so much indebted during both my visits to this city as to my very agreeable friends, the R——ls, whose kindness I shall never forget. Then came the hour of departure, and on the *19th of February* I bade my final adieu to the New World.

I was the only passenger on board the "Etna," that vessel being one of the Company's goods-steamers, and found myself in possession of an excellent deck-cabin, large and airy, infinitely preferable to the close and narrow quarters I had occupied in the "Africa;" everything in short had been, and continued to be, done for my comfort during the twelve days of the homeward voyage. But right glad was I once more to set foot on my native land, after so long an absence and such distant wanderings.



APPENDIX.

REMARKS ON "THE WINTER'S TALE."

JULY 28th.—‘Finished “The Winter’s Tale.” How grandly Hermione replies to the King’s first accusations! It is consistent with her frank and noble objective character, that tears and anger should not be so ready as with the weaker Desdemona or more womanish Imogen. What *instinctive* truth belongs to Shakespeare! It cannot be supposed that he laboriously studied out every little touch that gives individual life to his characters; his great imagination guided him into spiritual verities, even without the cognisance of his reason.

‘How inconsistent would it have seemed for Desdemona or Imogen to say—“I am not prone to weeping . . . but I have that honourable grief lodged here which burns worse than tears drown.” It is just this sort of woman that would be so frankly kind to her husband’s friend, as to give colour to a jealous fool’s suspicions;—note her own words.

‘Then is it not subtly fine that the ghost of Hermione should be represented as diffused in tears,—the feebler inner-soul, unsupported by the nobly strong physical woman, yielding helplessly to weakness? It may be said that it was not a real ghost, as the queen was living. Nevertheless we must hold it as a temporary separation of her body and her spirit—such as seems sometimes to occur in mesmeric trances—or the impressiveness of the story is lost. Are we to hold that a mere fit of indigestion communicated prophetic lore to Antigonus?

‘I dislike Florizel’s falsehood to King Leontes about his father. It might easily have been avoided. A dramatist ought

not to sink his higher characters by basenesses which we cannot forget nor forgive.

'Is it not well done that Leontes, ere his reunion with Hermione, should have won back our sympathy by his loving penitence, and given earnest of future goodness! The queen's restoration would otherwise have been painful. It must be observed, also, that Leontes made no direct attempt against her life. It would have been incongruous to restore Desdemona to Othello with an indelible finger-gripe on her neck. Posthumus, indeed, orders Imogen's death, but he does not himself use violence.

'Poor Camillo! why reward all his worthiness by mating him to that windmill-tongued old wretch Paulina?'

REMARKS ON "HAMLET."

July 30th.—[With such splendour has Shakespeare surrounded the very name of Hamlet, so largely has he made that character the mouthpiece for his own loftiest meditations, that, dazzled by the glory which encompasses this prince of tragedy-princes, most people account him a noble-minded hero,—a sort of suffering demigod,—and resent all attempt to show him in a less favourable light, as an offence against poetry and morals, nay, even as an attack upon the great dramatist himself. That such notions, as well as others commonly associated with the Hamlet drama, are untenable, is my settled belief, and I hope that the following remarks may tend to form or strengthen that conviction in at least some minds; though, indeed, when thus writing, I had no controversial design, my observations being merely intended to enlarge and elucidate the notes which now barely serve for their foundation.

With these remarks I proceed to an extract from my journal-notes for the 31st of July, which were written immediately after my first attentive reading of "Hamlet," an undertaking happily begun during our halt on the shores of the beautiful Jack-fish Lake.]

July 31st.—‘Finished reading “Hamlet;” will read it again and again. . . . Hamlet was more mad than he himself supposed—it was not all feigning. The slight unhingement of mind on seeing the ghost suggested to him to feign insanity. It is easy for imaginative men to go into half madness if they choose to give fancy the rein. They are always half mad in mind—fools are half mad in word and act.’

[There can be little doubt that Hamlet was not intended by Shakespeare to be actually mad.

(1) The subject of the original history of Hamlet (written in Latin by Saxo Grammaticus towards the close of the twelfth century, reproduced in French by Belleforest in his *Histoires Tragiques* (begun in 1564), and thence translated into English), which forms the basis of Shakespeare's drama, as well as most probably of earlier dramas on the same story, specially consists in the crafty devices carried out by the young Prince of Denmark under the guise of lunacy. Though Shakespeare modifies the old tales whence his plots are derived, it is not his general practice to alter them essentially; but to make feigned madness into real madness, in the case of the hero of this story, would be to change its whole spirit and design.

(2) The rude extravagancies of the ancient Hamlet being softened down in the earlier Shakespearean drama printed in 1603, the poet softens them down yet further in the matured play of 1604, as if wishing to prevent the madness from seeming too real. The hero is too mad in the old story, and too sane in the matured play, to deceive the careful observer, but in the immature play the true aspect of madness had been rather over-closely presented.

(3) The shrewdest observers in the play do not consider Hamlet to be mad. The King, Polonius, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern, all doubt or refuse to allow his insanity, while admitting his extravagance. Horatio quite ignores it; it is only the Queen and Ophelia who are fully deceived.

(4) Hamlet distinctly announces his intention to “put an antic disposition on,” and he does so occasionally with very obvious design.

(5) Hamlet repeatedly declares that he is not mad, except in policy. "I essentially am not in madness, but mad in craft:" "Ecstasy! my pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time . . . it is not madness that I have uttered: bring me to the test:" "I am but mad north-north-west:" immediately after which last-quoted saying he puts a most "antic disposition" on to ridicule Polonius, as quickly resuming a manner of the shrewdest sense on the entrance of the Players.

(6) His general conversation, habits, and conduct, are as far as possible from those commonly attributed to lunatics.

(7) His general conduct and conversation are not those of a lunatic as represented elsewhere in Shakespeare's writings. See, for example, Ophelia's real derangement:—"She . . . spurns enviously at straws: speaks things in doubt, that carry but half sense; her speech is nothing, yet the unshaped use of it doth move the hearers to collection: they aim at it, and botch the words up fit to their own thoughts." Hamlet, on the contrary, in his wildest moods, speaks with bitter positiveness things of the clearest meaning; his replies are "pregnant;" his speech, even when "lacking form a little," is "not like madness."

On the other hand it may be urged:—(1) There are strange outbreaks which could scarcely be counterfeit; such as Hamlet's "wild and whirling" words to his father's ghost—"Ah ha, boy! . . . art thou there, truepenny? . . . well said, old mole!" the sudden brutality of his sarcasms in the interview with Ophelia; and his extravagantly disgusting conduct at her burial. (2) Hamlet himself most solemnly declares his own "sore distraction," when apologising to Laertes for the burial outrage. "What I have done . . . I here proclaim was madness. . . . If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away . . . then Hamlet does it not. Who does it then?—His madness." Such a defence, if mere simulation, would be impossible, it might be said, for an even moderately honourable man; and one so steeped in baseness as to be capable of shielding himself by such degrading falsehood, must necessarily be an old and suspected offender against honour, incapable of impressing many persons with a belief in his

nobleness of character. Never could the discreet Horatio have had reason to say of such a one—"Now cracks a *noble* heart. Good-night, sweet prince." Nor the manly Fortinbras—"Let four captains bear Hamlet like a soldier . . . for he was likely . . . to have proved *right royally*." Nor the sensitive Ophelia—"O what a *noble* mind is here o'erthrown!"

The true explanation I believe to be that given in my journal, one which independently suggested itself on first perusal of the play, though I have met with it since. Hamlet's mind was slightly unhinged: he felt it to be so, and his swift imagination immediately showed him how his infirmity might be turned to profit by an easy exaggeration of its nature and extent. When it pleased him to control himself, he could generally do so to perfection; when he preferred to yield to his impulses, he could always do so with effect. He was one of those who have more art in dealing with a situation created for them, than in creating one for themselves. In act he seeks to falsify his own axiom—"There's a divinity doth shape our ends, rough-hew them how we will;" changing it into—"Doth rough-hew our ends, we shape them how we will;"—for, in reality, he usually has no ends at all.

I cannot agree in that very generally received estimate of Hamlet's character which is so eloquently expressed by Goethe, in his *Wilhelm Meister* (Book iv. chap. 13, *Carlyle's translation*).* "Shakespeare meant . . . to represent the effects of a great action laid upon a soul unfit for the performance of it. . . . A lovely, pure, noble, and most moral nature, without the strength of nerve which forms a hero, sinks beneath a burden which it cannot bear, and must not cast away."

Except in one respect, there is no want of nerve in Hamlet's constitution; on the contrary, he shows himself fearless, and even reckless, beyond most people's measure. His one weakness is a want of originating will-power; an innate defect derived from his feebly voluptuous mother, along with, perhaps, a certain

* My quotation is taken from the preface to the *Clarendon Press Series* edition of "Hamlet."

physical inertness. Let circumstances throw him into action, and no one goes straighter to his mark. Far from shrinking from the sternest action, he loves it; when he receives a strong impulse to set him agoing, he feels like a disarmed warrior new furnished with a sword; he revels in his power to wound the hearts and lives of those whom his moods may prompt him to attack, whether or not they have done him any adequate injury.

But when it is not a question of some special action suddenly presented to him, when a complex system of action has to be determined on, then his want of originative will hampers and perplexes him; and not only so, but his subtle imagination oppresses him with a burdensome crowd of ideas, which it takes him long—too long—to classify and reduce to working form.

Had he ever attained to seeing his way he would have gone straight forward—no man better; but then a path needs more illumination for some people than others, because they are more particular where they set their feet. Is it generally considered how difficult his path was? The action of the play (as I shall presently endeavour to show) hardly, if at all, belongs to rude and lawless times, but to a period of civilisation and order, when high-handed murder could not be perpetrated with impunity, nor rebellion entered on without preparation, or, at least, a fair pretext. Which of us moderns would lightly hasten to the murder of an uncle—one's lawful sovereign, one's own mother's husband,—merely because a phantom declared his guilt?—the corroborative evidence being little or none. Instead of thinking the scheme wherein to "catch the conscience of the king," a mere excuse for procrastination, I see in it the ingenious expedient of an "indifferent honest" mind, very reasonably mistrusting its own impressions. Whether or not ghosts were more believed in then than now, who could be sure, as Hamlet says, that this one was not a fiend in disguise?—"The devil hath power to assume a pleasing shape."

But Hamlet's mind being partially off its balance, it was a perilous experiment to unchain his passions, and act the madness to which he ever so slightly tended; consequently, as the action

advances, and the pressure on his brain becomes heavier, we find indications of real and dangerous excitement under provocative circumstances; and to this—to partial and momentary, not to entire and permanent, alienation of mental control—I partly attribute such incidents as the outbreak of cruel sarcasm in the interview with Ophelia, the frenzied declamation when the King has been “frighted with false fire,” and, above all, the almost veritably mad behaviour in the burial scene. I think, moreover, that Hamlet was not unconscious of these aberrations, and thus deluded himself (in the myth-making fashion of his mother) into believing that he made his *amende* to Laertes with perfect sincerity and honour.

The word *mad* is indeterminate: we need clearer definitions before pronouncing absolutely on Hamlet's state. It may be remarked, in passing, that we are led to understand that he perpetrated many wild eccentricities—like King David's, perhaps, when feigning madness among the Philistines—of which no details are given—

“Grating so harshly all his days of quiet,
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy”—

this being said (Act iii. 1) before any violent actions or speeches are recorded: besides which his lunacy was currently believed in by the populace (Act v. 1), which could hardly have been the case without some conspicuous demonstrations on his part. One would naturally expect this, as Hamlet's deeds, under the pretence of madness, form a very important portion of the ancient story:—“Hee rent and tore his clothes, wallowing and lying in the dirt and mire, his face all filthy and blacke, running through the streets like a man distraught, not speaking one word but such as seemed to proceed of madness and meere frenzie.”—(COLLIER,—*Shakespeare's Library*, vol. i. p. 137.)

Goethe's dictum, that Hamlet was of “a lovely, pure, and most moral nature,” I find it impossible to accept. This, to my mind, mistaken notion arises from want of discrimination between Hamlet's deeds and his words; and, again, between his own deeds and words, and those of other people in reference to him.

The strength of his character—and the key to it—consists in a magnificent imagination of the receptive sort ; as the weakness lies in a want of originating, creative will. A character of that type is essentially deceptive, because its power of assimilation causes it, chameleon-like, to assume all hues ; so that, if through circumstances it is inclined to the reception of beautiful influences, it receives such store of them as to seem eminently beautiful in the sheen of its borrowed adornments.

It is perhaps scarcely fair to contrast Hamlet's character with that of his friend Horatio, the latter being so little brought before us in action. Yet we have good grounds for allowing to Horatio all the nobleness ascribed to him by others in the play, for neither in word nor deed does he ever fall short of his standard ; while as regards Hamlet, though admitting his high reputation, we are compelled to assign it less to his deeds than to his vast stock of excellent sentiments, some of which, in truth, had little enough relation to his actual nature. But from this specious show of lofty habits of mind, in addition to fascinating manners and many dazzling accomplishments, arose the exaggerated estimate of his nobleness formed by most of the personages in the drama. As a curious illustration of the unplanned deceptiveness of his character, observe the remark of his uncle, King Claudius, when speaking of him to Laertes—"He being remiss, most generous, and free from all contriving." And this of the wary, subtle, secretive, dissimulating Hamlet !]

'Hamlet says that he is ambitious:—"I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious:”—it seems likely that he was.'

[Little as self-accusations, or half-ironical self-regarding sarcasms, are meant to be taken as true, there is often much truth in them, and they serve to show how the wind sets in a man's brain ; he has, at any rate, been occupying his thoughts on the subject. Hamlet manifests all the faults of which he definitely accuses himself, but in the negative, feminine manner that belongs to his nature, one which feels and speaks rather than acts. His revengefulness displays itself in bitterness, his

pride and ambition take the form of wounded vanity. "Not so, my lord : I am too much i' the sun :"—*Hor.* "Your poor servant ever. *Ham.* I'll change that name with you :"—"And what so poor a man as Hamlet is, may do :"—"I am most dreadfully attended :"—"I eat the air, promise-crammed : you cannot feed capons so :"—"Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks :"—"Why should the poor be flattered ?"—"What advancement may I hope from thee ?"—"Sir, I lack advancement :"—surely these citations prove that poverty and lack of position,—neither of which could have been more than comparative, in the case of the intensely beloved son of the Queen, the acknowledged heir to the throne of Denmark,—formed cause of discontentment to the prince, so constant and embittering that dignity and self-respect were unable to save him from laying bare the rankling wound at every opportunity, whether in presence of friend or foe. Would Horatio have permitted himself such weak self-display ? Is there anything of fortitude or heroism in Hamlet's incessant complainings, however natural and excusable ?

There is no warrant for the notion that Hamlet was debarred from a throne that was his by right of succession. The crown was clearly elective,—a fact which Hamlet himself does not dispute : "popped in between the election and my hopes," is the charge he brings against his uncle, he does not in that sense accuse him of usurpation ; and his very last breath is spent in promoting the election of Fortinbras to the vacant throne :—

"But I do prophesy the election lights
On Fortinbras : he has my dying voice."

It would nevertheless appear, from the passage just quoted, and from the remark of Rosencrantz to Hamlet—"You have the voice of the King himself for your succession,"—that potent influence accompanied the recommendation of those high in place, especially that of the reigning sovereign. But for the premature death of the elder Hamlet, he would undoubtedly have nominated his son as successor ; but no such nomination having been made, Claudius, aided by the Queen and Polonius, secures the election,

and, in doing so, seems unconscious that young Hamlet has been wronged, or even given cause for discontent. With evident sincerity the King exclaims (speaking of his nephew),—

. . . "What it should be
More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
So much from the understanding of himself,
I cannot dream of."

Subsequently the Queen expresses herself very similarly, when replying to the King's remark that Polonius had found "the head and source of all her [your] son's distemper:"—

"I doubt it is no other than the main,
His father's death and our o'er-hasty marriage."

Had Hamlet been deprived of his succession illegally, or even by straining of law, it is impossible that the usurpers should not have known that the disinherited prince had other grounds for discontent than those they specify. It is clear enough, however, that even if Hamlet did not think himself actually wronged in this exclusion, he was yet exceedingly disappointed at the sudden eclipse of his fortune.

It seems probable that disgust at his own subordinated position had as much to do with Hamlet's melancholy, as grief for his "dear father murdered," or righteous indignation at his mother's lapse from honour. People feel things differently. Hamlet had a refined and subtle intellect, and may be credited with lofty aspirations, but selfism (not exactly selfishness) was of the essence of his character; and such a character feels few except the most physically startling events by immediate impression, but passes them through his mind, and more or less consciously decides whether or not to feel them. His feelings, therefore, though often sufficiently good and powerful at the last, are to some extent at his own command at the first; and where present feelings connected with his personal wellbeing are also under consideration, they are apt to dominate those that relate to a remoter interest. Not so with the more objective mind; impressions with it are as wounds which hurt, and which

endure, according to the intrinsic nature and force of the blow that has occasioned them. With a Hamlet it is—I am miserable : Wherefore ? My father is dead. With an Ophelia—My father is dead, therefore I am miserable.

Hamlet had too much feeling for himself to have much for others, except as ministers to his comfort or convenience, though that by no means prevented others from having great feeling for him. His grief in the first interview with Ophelia must have been mostly pity for himself, not compassion for her, to judge by his subsequent brutality ; in fact he shows no sign of active good-heartedness throughout the whole drama, except in his injunction to the players regarding Polonius,—“ See you mock him not,”—which, I suspect, sprang from his consciousness that he had been too much lowering the dignity of high station, in presence of men of humbler rank, by his gibes at the Lord Chamberlain, a mistake that both pride and policy impelled him to set right.

The Hamlet in the ancient story is an utterly unscrupulous, though most able and crafty man, and Shakespeare, no doubt, to a great extent elaborated his Hamlet from the original character.]

‘Hamlet attempts to excuse his irresolution in not killing his uncle when at prayer, by the pretence that he waits for a deeper revenge.’

[I do not think that Shakespeare’s Hamlet habitually entertained thoughts so diabolical, but, through the force of his brooding imagination, he at the moment believed in those ideas, and felt an intellectual pleasure in contemplating his own sublime malignity. His real motive for sparing the King was, partly want of the impulse his nature required (a sort of psychical “Dutch courage”), partly the natural reluctance of a refined, and more or less honourable, gentleman to commit a cold-blooded murder.]

‘It seems to me improbable that the players should have acted before the King and Queen a play which, at the very outset, condemns the Queen’s conduct in regard to her second marriage, especially as this “over-hasty marriage” appears to have offended

the nation, and been a common subject of talk. Moreover, the dumb show at the beginning too accurately represents the real murder. So astute a man as Hamlet could not have wished the King to know with certainty that the horrible secret was discovered. I believe that Hamlet had no doubt of his uncle's guilt, but feigned to himself that he wished for further confirmation, through watching his conduct at the play, as a mere excuse for irresolution. Hamlet himself had remarked how easily an actor changes his countenance under the influence of the fictitious passion excited by his subject, and might not a spectator be equally affected, although not a "galled jade?"

[As has already been shown, I dissent from my former opinion that Hamlet was satisfied of his uncle's guilt. I continue to think that the players are made to present too closely the real circumstances of the King's murder and the Queen's marriage. Apart from abstract considerations, what are Hamlet's own words? "I'll have these players play *something like* the murder of my father," and afterwards,—"There is a play to-night . . . one scene of it *comes near* the circumstance . . . of my father's death." But in fact this scene is much more than *something like* that described by the ghost, it is identical with it,—the slumber in the garden, the poison poured into the ear, and, as if to prevent any chance of misapprehension, the motive of the murderer, and his marriage with his victim's widow, are carefully stated to the audience.

Surely in these improbabilities there must either have been oversight, possibly from indifference on Shakespeare's part to what he deemed unimportant; or concession to some theatrical dictation, prompted perhaps by unwillingness to alter the established representation of a favourite scene in existing popular dramas on the story of Hamlet.

A mere change of countenance in those witnessing a play, especially a play calculated to "appal the free" as well as to "make mad the guilty," proves nothing, arising as it might from extreme sensitiveness of nerve, or, on the part of one who knows himself suspected, from a fear of confirming the suspicion; never-

theless, in Hamlet's case it was worth while to seek for corroborative evidence by carefully watching the King. I cannot, however, believe that he lay staring open-eyed at his uncle, with an ostentation of brutal rudeness, as some actors have represented him to do, absurdly exaggerating the suggestion of the words—"For I mine eyes will rivet on his face."]

'Hamlet must have been at least thirty, by his reminiscences of Yorick, who died twenty-three years before. He speaks of his mother as a "matron" long past her younger days.'

[Thirty is distinctively specified as Hamlet's age, but there is evident incongruity between the earlier and later parts of the play in regard to this matter. At first the prince's youthfulness is dwelt on as if it were something almost noteworthy: "Young Hamlet"—"Going back to school [college] at Wittenberg"—"For Hamlet and . . . his favour, hold it . . . a violet in the youth of primy nature"—"Thou noble youth"—"Unmatched form and feature of blown youth"—"Believe so much in him that he is young:" and this idea of a scarcely developed manhood is preserved until the fifth act, when, in the scene with the gravediggers, we are informed, with an obviously designed precision, that Hamlet is exactly thirty years of age, a statement at variance with the spirit, if not the letter, of the passages just quoted.

It is difficult even to conjecture a cause for this inconsistency, the more remarkable that it does not exist in the quarto of 1603, where the gravedigger dates the defeat of the elder Fortinbras as happening "a dozen yeare" back instead of "thirty," and where much less is said about Hamlet's youthfulness; perhaps the change was designed to suit the appearance and age of some individual actor, or intended to recall some event which had happened thirty years before the date of a particular representation,—"*I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years,*" would come very effectively on an anniversary occasion from the lips of an old popular favourite. But, explain it as one may, the inconsistency exists, and I should prefer to reconcile it by believ-

ing the "thirty" a reckless error, than wrong so many other passages in accepting it as right. In all probability Hamlet was not much more than twenty years of age, nor the Queen, his mother, still attractive though a matron, much more than double the age of her only son.]

'I do not think that Hamlet was a fat man ;—"fat and scant of breath" means out of condition, which he might well be when undergoing such troubles. The Queen would hardly have said "he's fat," if his corpulency had been evident and notorious. Ophelia, moreover, speaks of his "unmatched form."'

[Some authors believe that the expression "fat and scant of breath" was allusive to the stoutness of Richard Burbage, the original actor of the part of Hamlet—on the principle of making a virtue of necessity—as if to declare it essential in the drama that the prince should be of ponderous figure.* I think the other a sounder view: Hamlet was not corpulent, though perhaps inclined that way; he was merely out of condition. As he says himself—"I have of late . . . forgone all custom of exercises." Against this, however, may be quoted another of his own sayings—"Since he [Laertes] went into France, I have been in continual practice [in fencing];" along with the King's assertion to Laertes—"Sir, this report of his did Hamlet so envenom with his envy that he could nothing do but wish and beg your sudden coming o'er to play with him." We have here, I believe, another of the poet's occasional oversights; for the statements are incompatible, unless one suppose the former of them a mere invention to deceive the traitorous friends. But, besides that Hamlet's speech on that occasion bears the stamp of truthfulness, it is far more likely that a man, really melancholy, and fictitiously mad, should refrain from such an exercise as fencing, than practice it incessantly, at the risk of attracting remark.]

'Why should Laertes persevere in his base revenge after accepting Hamlet's explanation? He acts as the Indian savages

* See "Hamlet"—*Clarendon Press Series*, 1872. Notes, p. 271.

do—blood for blood ; without regarding whether the slain got his death foully, fairly, accidentally, or by his own deed, as when one rushes against the levelled spear of another.'

[The play of Hamlet belongs in a manner to two epochs—to the rough times of coarse carousal, and single-handed duels between monarchs for disputed territories, as well as to the more polished and educated period of universities and Parisian fencing-masters ; though, on examination, it will be found that the latter idea immensely predominates,—that while the mere setting of the play is partly anterior, its whole action belongs to a period little, if at all, antecedent to the era of the poet himself. The former idea, indeed, has little prevalence (apart from the known relation of the drama to the ancient Scandinavian story), except in the particulars already mentioned, and in the reference to recent defeats of England by the Danish arms, entailing homage and annual tribute from the vanquished power—a state of things only historically conceivable as existent in the remote past.

But, on the other side, we are overwhelmed with proofs of Shakespeare's intention to lay his action in modern times. Hamlet and Horatio are students at a German university ; Laertes repairs to Paris for instruction in polite accomplishments ; King Claudius is guarded by "Switzers," and wages war by means of "brazen cannon," while kettle-drums and trumpets and ordnance-salvos enliven his festivities. Prince Hamlet's every-day costume of *doublet, hat, stockings, and garters*, has little in common with the dress of the ancient Danes, any more than his delicate "rapier" resembles their ponderous spears and battle-axes. The classics are freely referred to ; lawyers with their *quiddities, quillies, cases, tenures, and tricks*, are familiarly spoken of, and specimens of their handiwork, in the matter of treaties and royal missions, are offered to us ; we even find "crown's quest law" in full and beautiful existence. Pictures are suspended on the " arras "—covered walls ; miniatures adorn the courtier's neck, and "tablets" hang at his girdle. And, if all this were not enough to fix the period, we are given, in Osric, the elaborate portrait of a *euphuising* Elizabethan exquisite ; while the "players" form

the very "abstract and brief chronicle of the time" in which Shakespeare lived and wrote.

Strange is it that, in spite of such weight of reason for treating "Hamlet" as a *Renaissance* story, one should constantly see stage-managers oscillating in their treatment of it between eras removed from each other by some five or six centuries; presenting us, for example, with a portrait of old King Hamlet as a semi-savage (as if full-length oil-pictures belonged to the days of Sweyn or Canute), though in his ghost-hood he always appears as a plate-armoured knight, equipped for a Tudor tournament. But the final scene is the great triumph of unreason, when we behold Hamlet and Laertes, in fancy dresses, fighting a duel with foils, seconded by Osric and his fellow-courtiers in doublets and trunk-hose, and regarded from on high by royalties in Oriental garments; while the whole takes place in a vast, cavernous, Stonehenge-like hall, decorated with semi-mythical Danish symbols and devices—dragons, vulture-wings, *land-ravager*-banners, battle-axes, black ravens, and the like; the background being crowded with the figures of barbaric guards, evidently fresh returned from coercing Ethelred the Unready, or some such Saxon potentate of bygone days.

Nay, far more surprising, one discovers even in the writings of so able and judicious a critic as Mr. Knight such a passage as this, which I take leave to quote:—"That Shakspeare adopted the period of the action as related by Saxo Grammaticus there can be no doubt. The following passage is decisive:—

' And, England, if my love thou hold'st at ought,
(As my great power thereof may give thee sense;
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
Pays homage to us) thou may'st not coldly set
Our sovereign process.'

We have here a distinct intimation of the period before the Norman Conquest, when England was either under the sovereignty of the Northmen, as in the time of Canute, or paid tribute to the

Danish power."—(*Pictorial Edition of Shakspere*. Introductory Notice to Hamlet, p. 97 ; Tragedies, vol. i.)

Surely, where anachronism cannot be avoided, it is better to choose the course which leads to a few violations of historic fact, and a very few of historic probability (neither of a description much affecting the intellectual value of the play), than to choose that which positively turns the world upside down ; which defaces Shakespeare's noblest work with an absurdity as great in kind, and nearly so in degree, as if one transferred its action to Ashanti-land and brought Hamlet naked on the stage ! This is not a *historical* play, like "Julius Cæsar" or "Coriolanus," where scene and date are unmistakably prescribed ; nor does it resemble such works of *fancy* as "The Winter's Tale" or "A Midsummer Night's Dream," where anachronisms seem purposely introduced ; it is a drama of complex thought and feeling, one specially marked as belonging to a cultivated and artificial European epoch, clearly unassignable to any earlier centuries than those which witnessed the revival of classic literature and art.

I cannot doubt, therefore, that the play ought to be treated, *in every respect*, as one relating to sixteenth-century times, and to English manners of the Elizabethan date ; with just such slight admixture of Danish accessories, and occasional indications of want of refinement, as may give it a tinge of that typical Northern and Scandinavian quality which the subject, and the nearly-buried foundation idea, of the drama, seem in some small measure to demand.

—In the conduct of Laertes we may certainly discover those savage impulses which at all periods have prompted men to deeds of blood, wherein vengeance was more thought of than justice, but I find in him far less of the barbarian acting under rude but definite laws of retaliation, than of the corrupt and conscienceless Italian homicide of the Borgia type,—his base dissimulation and fiendish readiness to resort to poisoned weapons evidencing a much lower moral status than that of the ordinary Red Indian warrior.

One of the marvels of Shakespeare's art is his power of

imbuing the mind with certain notions in regard to his characters by indirect and scarcely discernible processes ; partly, sometimes, by a subtle juxtaposition of ideas. Pleasing or unpleasing associations environ each character, and form the atmosphere within which it dwells, moving, as it were, either amidst music and fragrant odours, or among foul exhalations and discordant janglings.

In the case of Laertes we are nowhere directly called upon, till near the closing scene, to view him as anything but a brave, honourable, and noble young man. He is singularly skilled in many exercises, high in favour with the sovereign, affectionately regarded by his father and his sister, and so esteemed by the people that a large section of them are ready to accept him for their king and leader ; yet, from the beginning, a light shadow rests upon him, and we are not entirely surprised at the revelation of his innate worthlessness.

On his first appearance he ungraciously schools his gentle sister, and receives from her a mild but significant rebuke ; and, immediately afterwards, his father also addresses him in language of reproof—" Yet here, Laertes ! aboard, aboard for shame ! " slightly suggesting that the son frequently erred on the score of punctuality. Moreover, the counsels given to him, ending so emphatically with a caution against being " false to any man," rather imply that those particular counsels had reference to particular faults in the young man's character. In a little while we find his morbidly subtle father devising schemes to watch his conduct at Paris, plainly indicating that he was not quite trusted at home. Would any father have cared so to spy on Horatio ?

His next appearance is in the character of a hot-headed rebel, relegated to contempt by the contrast between his blustering rant and the King's masterly coolness. We then discover him not only willing to enter upon the treacherous revenge suggested by another, but prepared for deeds of treachery in general, by the possession of the deadly unctior, he had bought from the mountebank. At the burial scene, again, even if we had not (then and

previously) surmised some affectation in his grief, we at once discover it in the light of Hamlet's remarks, none the less effectively sarcastic because they "lack form a little."

Everywhere, in short, Laertes is mistrusted, blamed, despised, or overcrowded by some one, in spite of all his superficial bravery. His lion-skin is for ever blowing back, and affording glimpses of the carrion wolf beneath it.

Ere leaving Laertes another observation suggests itself—an important and typical one;—The spectator or reader of a drama should never forget that information derived from the characters in the play is not necessarily trustworthy information. People forget this, and they also forget that each character can have but a limited knowledge in regard to the action of the drama of which it constitutes a part. In discussing the revenge of Laertes, one is apt to overlook a circumstance which slightly counts in his favour—that the hot-headed young man knew nothing as to the manner of his father's death save what the King told him. What that was we do not learn, but there is a significant hint that no true version of the affair met the ear of Polonius's son, in the words spoken by the King at the beginning of Act iv. 7:—"Now must grim conscience my acquittal seal . . . sith you have heard . . . that he which hath your noble father slain *pursued my life*." Whatever might be Hamlet's real or presumed designs, he had certainly neither pursued his uncle's life nor even threatened it.

In the quarto of 1603 it is the King that suggests and provides the poisoned unction. The alteration in the folio plainly enough denotes Shakespeare's intention to discredit Laertes.]

'I cannot understand Hamlet's behaviour to Ophelia. His sorrow at giving up her love seems real even to distraction, yet a short while afterwards he affronts her with obscene jests in presence of all the court. And then at her funeral, poor innocent! his extravagant violence is disgusting, and insulting to her memory, without any object that can be seen.

Was Ophelia spotless? I think so, though her songs seem to allude to seduction by Hamlet. Ophelia's mind being strained

by grief at her lover's conduct, is suddenly overthrown by the superadded misery of her father's death. Her thoughts dwelling at the time chiefly on disappointed love, she harps on that theme in her madness, and she, the most modest and charming of maidens, sings coarse songs which she has gathered in her childhood from the lips of some ribald nurse, such a one as the gross-minded beldame in "Romeo and Juliet." How courtly the Lord Chamberlain's daughter always is! For instance, speaking of herself she says—"And I of *ladies* most deject and wretched,"—not, of *women*.'

[Notwithstanding the opinions held by certain German commentators, I have no doubt whatever that Ophelia was spotless. It cannot be denied that she was considered so by the characters in the play itself,—although, besides the songs of her real madness, various remarks of Hamlet, in his assumed madness, to her and to her father, as well as the counsels and reproofs she received from Polonius and Laertes, tend to throw suspicion on her purity,—for not only do the priests, who grudge her all they dare, allow her at her burial "her virgin crants" and her "maiden strewments," but Laertes at the same time bears similar testimony, and, anxious as he is to make the worst of Hamlet's offences, only lays to his charge—"a sister driven into desperate terms." Perhaps the contrast is specially designed, that, whereas Hamlet's real or fictitious madness is chiefly an exaggeration of his impulses, Ophelia's madness largely presents the flat opposite of her tendencies and nature.

For Hamlet's conduct on the occasions referred to there were both his own motives and the dramatist's separate reasons. His odious jesting (less odious in those coarser days than it would now seem, but doubtless out of place even then,—and, be it remarked, more foully gross in one passage than commentators seem to have discovered, judging by their far-fetched interpretations) was prompted by the mental excitement of a crisis, an excitement which, so far from controlling, he purposely gave way to and exaggerated. This explanation, with some adjustment, meets the case of the rude sarcasms at the interview scene, as to

which I fully agree with those writers who believe Hamlet to have become suddenly aware of the presence of the King and Polonius. Not only is this view probable in itself, but it accords with the ancient story, wherein the prince is made aware of concealed enemies by a most curious device,—one of his friends setting loose in his direction a large fly, with straw tied to its feet, which serves as a warning at a very dangerous moment, when feigned insanity is about to yield to the temptations of love.

The dramatist may have had a subtle reason for Hamlet's offensive jesting with Ophelia—namely, to demonstrate that she was free from evil in regard to her lover; for had it been otherwise, not even Hamlet would have ventured on such hazardous subjects. Perhaps that astute prince is to be understood as designedly jesting so broadly, in order to suggest his innocence of wrong to Ophelia, as well as to indicate madness by an ostentatious change from his former manner in her society.

I can trace no sign of “a most pure and moral nature” in Hamlet; on the contrary, even in his exhortations to the Queen, a coarse imagination exhibits itself at every turn. Did Hamlet draw his “lovely, pure, and most moral nature” from his strong-headed father, he of the “foul crimes done in the days of nature;” or from that “most seeming virtuous queen,” his mother? Or did it pass to him from some ancestor whose virtues had also enriched his uncle, the “king of shreds and patches,” “a murderer and a villain?” *Aquilæ non generant columbas.*]

‘Why was Ophelia treated as a suicide, when the cause of her death—the breaking of a willow bough—was so perfectly well known? All of a piece with that barbarous theology which places a man’s salvation rather in some outward act than in the state of his heart.’

[I should wonder at myself for asking such a question, did I not know that hundreds of readers may have felt the same difficulty. Who says that Ophelia did not commit suicide? Who but that soft falsehood-monger the maudlin Queen! And, as if to show herself in her true colours as an arrant fabricator, she

tells the story of the maiden's death with such gaudy accumulation of picturesque details, impossible for her to have known of, that one is not surprised to find commentators terming the elaborate little speech rather poetical than dramatic. It was not meant to be dramatic (save as an exposition of Queen Gertrude's character): in confirmation of which view one finds that Shakespeare's matured text is a great expansion of the corresponding passage in the 1603 quarto; the minute catalogue of the flowers, with the coarse parenthetical allusion, being added for the evident purpose of marking the nature of the passage.

The priests speak of Ophelia's death as "doubtful," to save their consciences, but the gravediggers assume it as notorious that there was no doubt whatever in the matter. But how strange an exposition of the ideas of those times, to assign moral responsibility to an insane person, and reckon that the Almighty would condemn her soul, because of a deed occasioned by His own act in delivering her mind to madness!]

'The Queen, with feminine deceit, conceals her son's secret by a double lie—the second part gratuitous: 1st, He is mad: 2d, He weeps over slain Polonius.'

[Several false notions would never have arisen had the apparently subordinate character of the Queen been closely studied; both her position and her nature bearing importantly on some of the leading personages of the drama. In the ancient story she is the heiress of the sovereignty of Denmark, her husbands deriving rank chiefly through her; and though (as we have seen) Shakespeare does not entirely adopt this view of her position, some remembrance of it seems, perhaps unconsciously, to have influenced his mind, judging by certain indications furnished by King Claudius and Polonius. The former not only speaks of his consort as "the imperial jointress to this warlike state," words implying something more than a dignity derived from her husband, but he shows a deference to her, especially with regard to Hamlet, which springs from stronger considerations than mere conjugal love. The latter displays towards the Queen not only

the obsequious loyalty of a good courtier, but also a respectfully affectionate familiarity that seems grounded on old and intimate association with one who had long been possessed of independent importance. There is something in his manner which suggests the almost parental and filial relationship between a veteran statesman and the female sovereign to whose youth and inexperience he had been the beloved and faithful adviser, a relationship which could scarcely have existed unless formed previously to her marriage with King Hamlet. For example—

Pol.— . . . “What might you [King Claudius]
Or my dear majesty, your queen here, think?”

And mark the familiarity of this private conversation with the Queen—a mature matron, be it remembered :

Pol.—“He will come straight. Look you lay home to him :
Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear with,
And that your grace hath screened and stood between
Much heat and him. I'll 'sconce me even here.
Pray you be round with him. . . .

Queen.—I'll warrant you. Fear me not.”

In the same direction tends the Queen's reproof of the garrulous old man's prolixity—“More matter with less art.” Words so ungracious would hardly have been used unless some playfulness of manner neutralised their harshness : may not we fancy them spoken with an air of condescending affection, as of one saying—Incorrigible ! shall I never teach you the limits of my patience ?

Assuming then that the Queen possessed an inherent dignity quite apart from the rank derivable from her royal husband, we shall understand why her importance in the state is greater than otherwise seems reasonable ; we shall comprehend how Claudius, in gaining her hand, easily supplants a nephew so beloved by the populace that they would not have allowed him to be defrauded of a succession naturally devolving on him, and we see more fully the source of the influence through which she so long shielded Hamlet from her husband's unscrupulous jealousy.

But her character is what immediately concerns us ; first, as helping us to estimate that of her son, who may be supposed to draw much of his nature from his mother ; secondly, as explaining several perplexities in the drama. Laxity of moral, and probably of bodily, fibre, is her chief characteristic. She is eminently passive, her soul is a stagnant pool to mirror angels or devils in, to receive into its bosom anything heavy enough to sink, whether gold or dross. Kind-hearted she is, in an easy sort of way ; it is less trouble than to be malevolent. She would "hang on" her first husband in gloating affection, and yet, "within a month," she is won to the same affection for another : "Frailty, thy name is woman," is a true saying, indeed, as applied to her.

Weakness, in one form or other, seems always her attribute. "Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works,"—exclaims the kingly ghost, in commending her to Hamlet's pity. "So loving to my mother," says Hamlet of his father, "that he might not beteen the winds of heaven visit her face too roughly,"—slightly implying that she was one of those fancifully delicate creatures who require and exact luxurious care. "The Queen, his mother, lives almost by his looks :"—commendable maternal love, but the phrase suggests some weakness. There is little significance, perhaps, in any one of these passages, but in combination they help to form the moral atmosphere with which Shakespeare has surrounded this erring queen.

But if one quality more than another belongs to such lax-minded harlot-hearted women, that quality is untruthfulness. Truth looks cold and hard, lying seems soft and kindly ; each truth must have its outline, lies have none, but pour from the sinewless soul like milk from an overturned bucket. Then a truth is apt to be plain and uninviting, while a lie may be made sumptuously beautiful in an accursed kind of beauty ; and the flaccid steamy soul loves what it thinks pretty, and likes to hunt for approbation by offering it to others. And, in course of time, these souls can only live on lies—as an ancient opium-eater solely lives on opium,—falsehood becomes truth to them : and so they at length become truthful in an inverted fashion,—for they

entirely renounce truth, which from lips like theirs would be nothing but the most specious sort of lie.

Such people are the great myth-makers. No sooner is a fact brought to their minds than it is served like a beggar-child new adopted by a king, washed and combed and brushed, and tricked out in gorgeous apparel; then to them it becomes a recognisable reality, and may be complacently presented to the notice of the general world.

Such was the process to which we are indebted for the charming description of poor Ophelia's rash plunge into the river. The suicidal act was real, all the rest was mere imagination, or fiction founded on the barest fact. And mark how characteristic of such a narrator—in the very midst of her dulcet poetisings she cannot refrain from uttering one of the impure reminiscences with which her mind is loaded.

Not dissimilar is the case of Hamlet's tears over Polonius. Even so distinguished a critic as Lamb falls into the trap prepared and baited by this queen's deceitfulness, writing thus mistakenly (as it seems to me):—"The conference ended. And now Hamlet was at leisure to consider who it was that he had killed: and when he came to see that it was Polonius, the father of the lady Ophelia whom he so dearly loved, he drew apart the dead body, and, his spirits being now a little quieter, he wept for what he had done."—(*Tales from Shakespeare.*)

Shakespeare's version of the matter is scarcely so touching. Hamlet—at the beginning, not at the end of the conference—discovers whom he has slain, and half anathematises him as a "wretched, rash, intruding fool," with a good deal more hard language. Towards the close of the scene he certainly expresses himself more humanely:—"For this same lord [Polonius] I do repent: but heaven hath pleased it so, to punish me with this and this with me:"—but a few lines farther on he drops the dignified tone he had adopted while denouncing the Queen, falls into congenial sarcasm, and concludes a most sane and sagacious speech by brutally exclaiming, in regard to the body of Polonius,—“I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room. Mother, good night. In-

deed this counsellor is now most still, most secret, and most grave, who was in life a foolish, prating knave." He then drags off the corpse, with the unfeeling apostrophe—"Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you."

Now, hearken to her majesty,—“fair, sober, wise :”—

King.—"Where is he gone ?

Queen.—To draw apart the body he hath killed :

O'er whom his very madness, like some ore

Among a mineral of metals base

Shows itself pure ; he weeps for what is done."

Is not this of a piece, and of precisely equal value, with the florid little speech made by the same veracious lady at the burial scene, when, seeking to deprecate the wrath of Laertes ?—

"This is mere madness :

And thus awhile the fit will work on him ;

Anon, as patient as the female dove,

When that her golden couplets are disclosed,

His silence will sit drooping."

Melancholy, no doubt, formed part of Hamlet's disposition, but there was nothing dove-like in any corner of his nature. Hear the last cooings of this dove over the "good old man" he has so lately slain :—

King.—"Now, Hamlet, where is Polonius ? *Hamlet*.—At supper. *King*.—At supper ! Where ? *Hamlet*.—Not where he eats, but where he is eaten ! a certain politic convocation of worms are e'en at him . . . if you find him not within this month you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby." So much for Hamlet's tears over the father of the lady Ophelia.

From the unprincipled, feeble, deceitful, luxurious Queen, Hamlet derives his selfishness and unscrupulous subtlety, also his weakness of will and general inertness, probably also a certain lymphatic softness of body and sensitiveness of nerve. From his father the King, he derives the wild, *berserker* violence of temperament that underlies his polished exterior ; from him likewise are

inherited the courage and aptitude for manly exercises that so greatly distinguish him. But, for his wit, intellect, brooding imagination, and refined studiousness, we must search further back,—possibly to his unrecorded paternal grandfather, for the able though villanous uncle has in several of these respects something in common with the able but fairly honourable nephew.]

‘King Claudius appears to possess craft, ability, and some share of majesty. Probably the former king had too much used with his wife that “eye like Mars to threaten and command,” while his brother wooed her with gentleness, and that indescribable art by which some deep minds can lead others to their will almost without the utterance of a word.’

[Hamlet says that his father was “so loving” to his mother “that he might not beteem the winds of heaven visit her face too roughly;” but (besides making allowance for a son’s natural partiality in the case of a “dear father” deceased), one must admit that a hardy warrior—“full of bread, with all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May”—might have mingled roughness with his caresses, and made even his well-meant carefulness distasteful to a sensitive woman, by displaying it in a dictatorial, half contemptuous way. Claudius, on the other hand, could “smile and smile,” although a villain, and from him she met with sympathy and deference as well as love: “with witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts,” he won that “most seeming virtuous queen.” So says the injured husband himself, and it is only reasonable to conclude that, to the Queen’s eyes, her first consort was deficient in other respects than these, in which his rival admittedly surpassed him.

Claudius is very commonly regarded as a mean contemptible wretch in mind and body, as well as a treacherous murderous villain, but there is no warrant for such a notion, except in the assertions of the two Hamlets, who could not but exaggerate his defects and ignore his merits. Polonius, Laertes, the various envoys and courtiers, the sovereigns of England and Norway, all

treat him with a fulness of general respect which an utterly despicable being would hardly have commanded, notwithstanding his exalted position; and his various kingly qualities are sufficiently evident to any careful reader of the play.

In the quarto of 1603 there are two significant differences, where Hamlet points the contrast between the royal brothers. His father he describes as possessing—

“ A front wherein all vertues are set downe
For to adorne a king, and guild his crowne : ”

while of his uncle he says—

“ Looke you now, here is your husband,
With a face like *Vulcan*.
A looke fit for a murder and a rape,
A dull dead hanging looke, and a hell-bred eie,
To affright children and amaze the world.
. A ! have you eyes ? ”——

In the matured drama nothing is said in regard to the older Hamlet's “vertue,” but merely—

“ A combination and a form indeed,
Where every god did seem to get his seal
To give the world assurance of a man : ”

And, instead of the detailed condemnation of the usurper's personal appearance, we have only such generalised phrases as this—

“ Here is your husband ; like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother
. Ha ! have you eyes ? ”]

‘ I do not think that Polonius was meant to be altogether contemptible. His children both loved and respected him, and the people appear to have done so likewise. Nothing could be more wise and excellent than his counsels to his son.’

[This view is now so generally accepted that arguments in its support are needless. It should be remembered that the

veteran statesman must not be solely judged of as he appears when presented to us in the decay of his faculties, and assuredly not as when held up to scorn and ridicule by his bitter enemy young Hamlet. I have somewhere met with the just remark that King Claudius probably owed his quiet accession to the throne to the exertions of Polonius,—whose influence with the populace was evidently considerable. (See the King's speech to Laertes, (Act i., 2.)—"The head is not more native to the heart . . . than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.") Hence Hamlet's enmity to the old lord, and his early conviction that Ophelia must be given up, as too dangerous on account of her hostile surroundings.]

'Hamlet seems hardly accurate in speaking of the grave as the "undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveller returns," seeing that his father's ghost had returned thence to him and revealed some of the secrets of the other world.'

[The contradiction is perhaps more apparent than real. No man who quits this world as a traveller to the world beyond the grave, ever returns to resume his former place; the hopelessness of return, not the "undiscovered" nature of the country, being the subject of that particular sentence. But, indeed, so much confusion has always prevailed in regard to the clear separation of the distinct ideas of body and of spirit, that Hamlet may have been merely speaking conventionally of the utter annulment of physical existence that accompanies death, while perfectly recognising the continued and active life of the spiritual part of man.

No one more believes in the immortality of the soul than a Scottish Presbyterian, who moreover fully anticipates a resurrection of the body, yet among the sixty-seven "Paraphrases of Scripture,"—which with the "Psalms of David," and five "Hymns," have for generations formed the only authorised hymnal for the Established Church of Scotland,—occurs such a verse as this:—

" But man forsakes this earthly scene,
 Ah ! never to return :
 Shall any following spring revive
 The ashes of the urn ?"—*Paraphrase*, viii. 9.

Or, as we have it in another paraphrase :—

" In the cold grave, to which we haste,
 There are no acts of pardon past :
 But fix'd the doom of all remains,
 And everlasting silence reigns."—*Paraphrase*, xv. 6.

On this subject I have recently met with a very curious passage in an interesting book, entitled *Caliban, or the Missing Link*, by Daniel Wilson, LL.D., ann. 1873—where, after quoting from an ancient Scottish ballad, in which three young men are represented as returning from Paradise to visit their sorrowful mother, but hastening away at daybreak according to the custom of such visitants, the writer expresses himself as follows :—" In the confusion of ideas as shown in the birch gathered at the gates of Paradise, the penance dreaded in case of their absence being discovered, and the chiding of the grave's channering, or fretting worm, [—" The cock doth crawl, the day doth daw, the channering worm doth chide"—] there are striking illustrations of the undefined blending of conceptions of an immaterial existence wholly apart from the body, with the difficulty, as common to the mind of the English peasant as that of the Australian savage, of conceiving any clear realisation of the disembodied spirit, or of death distinct from the 'wormy grave.'"—(*Caliban*, p. 150.)

Few things are more perplexing to the educated mind than the uneducated mind's incapability of reason. In the above case, however, an, at least *rational*, explanation of the apparent confusion is possible ;—a too earthly spirit might be thought of, as being so bound for a while by semi-material links to its former body, that it would be conscious of whatever affected the decaying tenement, though no longer dwelling within it, and would find itself unable to escape from bondage till set free by the special act of Heaven. This notion has been recently held by certain spiritualistic writers.]

REMARKS ON "MACBETH."

September 1st.—When reading "Macbeth" among the Rocky Mountains, thoughts were present to my mind which long afterwards shaped themselves into the following utterances,*—as expressed in a letter to the *Scotsman*, on the occasion of the first visit to Edinburgh of those able Shakespearean actors, Herr and Mrs. Bandmann, and now extracted thence with such omissions and alterations as their present situation seems to require.

'The vulgar notion regarding Macbeth and his queen is simply that the former was a murderous villain, and the latter a furious, diabolical termagant. It were needless to enlarge on the absurdity of such a view. . . . Macbeth is no common assassin, but rather a man of an originally noble and highly imaginative nature. We see the first entrance of evil, we follow its progress, we watch the gradual effacement of Heaven's image, even until the final ruin; but amidst all our hatred of the crimes—nay, contempt for the hypocrisies—of the tyrant, we are able to feel that he is human, we sorrow for the victim of hellish arts, we pity him as he cries, grief o'erladen,—

"I have lived long enough; my way of life
Is fallen into the sear and yellow leaf;"

or when, with a forlornness so absolute, he receives the news of the death of his ever-faithful wife.

And she, that marvellous, lurid queen, she is no coarse virago—Would a blustering Eve have much prevailed on Adam at the Paradisal tree?—but a loving, loveable woman; one who can say—"How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me"—(How did she lose her babes?—by some soul-maddening destruction?); one whose desperate daring in a single great sin never alters her husband's affection and respect—[*e.g.* "Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck"]: no Regan or Goneril is she, but one of

* How far these ideas were original, how far suggested by a magazine article read by me about that time, I cannot now determine.

"little hands," delicate of frame, altogether feminine. How otherwise would her whole being have so collapsed? She is a pythoness possessed by the demon; utterances of more than mortal power proceed from this temple of the gods; then, torn and shattered by the included force, the frail fabric sinks into irreparable ruins. (This idea of Lady Macbeth I think to be certainly the true one. Malcolm's "fiendish queen" goes for little. It is the speech of an enemy who could know nothing of her secret history, and it occurs in one of those passages whose inferiority and many contradictions mark them as belonging to those believed to have been added by the hand of Middleton.)

. . . To specify particular scenes: nothing can surpass that where Macbeth, wavering for a moment, is forced by her inspirations to rush on his fate—

"Was the hope drunk wherein you dressed yourself?
Hath it slept since?"

or that where she stands so bravely by her husband when Banquo's apparition unnerves him; or, chief of all, that grandest scene of troubled sleep-walking, just ere the poor heartbroken lady sinks into that sleep which knows no unrest;—"Macbeth doth murder sleep," and sleep hath murdered Macbeth's queen.

. . . To interpret the great poet is no easier than to explore the deepest mysteries of life and nature—a search which each man will make with different lights and different powers, thus arriving at correspondingly different conclusions. . . . But let all who may take part in the acting of this drama seriously consider the responsibility of their work; those filling even the most subordinate places, reflecting how much depends on their care and intelligence, and *realising* to themselves the scenes they appear in,—those acting the Witches recollecting that they are for the time grim emissaries of the Evil One, grotesque in sin's proper ugliness—as the hyæna chuckling over his prey,—but by no means idiotical, buffoonish jigmakers; above all, those personating kings, princes, and nobles, remembering the dignity that belongs to such characters, the self-respectful reserve that should not be quite absent even in the stormiest scenes—hands and eyes

chary of quick movement, diction level, not poreupined with emphasis. A Shakespeare drama is no petty fish-pond to be tormented with paltry gales ; it is a summer ocean, long sweeping in power-charged swell ere it break into the infrequent passion of its white and surging billows.'—(Letter to the *Scotsman*, March 28th, 1873.)

[“Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble : or be alive again
And dare me to the desert with thy sword ;
If trembling I inhabit then, protest me
The baby of a girl.”—(Act iii. 4.)

In reference to the words—“If trembling I inhabit then,” the Editors of the *Clarendon Press Series Shakespeare* write as follows :—“There are few passages of our author which have given rise to so much discussion as this. The reading and punctuation given in our text [as cited above] are those of the first folio.” Besides varieties in pointing, the alterations and interpretations of the words “I inhabit then,” are almost innumerable. “I inhabit then,”—“I inhabit, then,”—“I inhibit, then,”—“I inhabit thee,”—“I unknight me,”—“I evade it then,”—“I inherit then,”—“I exhibit then,”—“I inhabit here,”—*trembling* having sometimes the force of a noun, sometimes of an adjective ; *inhabit* being sometimes held to signify “continuance in a given position,” sometimes to indicate the sense of “keep at home—abide under a roof,” as contrasted with wandering in a desert. (See “Macbeth,” *Clar. Pr. Series*, p. 133.)

Amidst this conflict of opinion, I would ask whether the word “inhabit” may not be used in the sense “put on—don”—taking *habit* as a term for dress, and *trembling* as a noun ; and holding the passage to convey a metaphor similar to that of the Scriptural phrases—“clothed with cursing as with a garment,” “the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness ?” Accepting this view, Macbeth would be understood to say—“If I then put a *trembling* habit on—appear in the guise of a trembler,—declare me a weakling’s weakling.”]

REMARKS ON THE "MERCHANT OF VENICE."

September 17th.—'Finished that noble play "The Merchant of Venice." Had there been a fair tribunal, and another "second Daniel" to take Shylock's part, I think the Jew would have come better out of it. It was mere quibbling to make him guilty of attempting the life of a citizen. You do not attempt a man's life by accusing him before a court of justice of a capital crime, in the same sense as by stabbing him with a dagger.

[Had the contract itself been illegal, it would have been annulled on that account, and the Jew might have been punished,—first, for promoting a transaction contrary to law and morals,—secondly, for attempting a citizen's life by means of that transaction. But, on the contrary, the validity of the bond and the formal legality of the transaction were most distinctly affirmed—("Why, this bond is forfeit; and *lawfully* by this the Jew may claim a pound of flesh.")—"Of a strange nature is the suit you follow, but in such rate, that the Venetian law *cannot* impugn you."—"There is no power in Venice can alter a *decree established*,")—and that admitted, the State elevated the contract into a minor law, so to speak, adopted it as its own, and became responsible for the consequences involved in its fulfilment. There cannot but be a legal, although not a moral, distinction, between attempting a person's life by legal or illegal practices. A man seeks to remove an enemy by tempting him into debaucheries calculated to destroy his existence,—is he therefore a murderer in the eye of the law? A man imprisons his debtor, well knowing that grief and shame will shortly kill him,—is he therefore a murderer in the eye of the law? A man compasses his neighbour's death by falsely accusing him of a capital crime,—is even he a murderer, subject to the gallows? I fear not.

Another difficulty suggests itself—Shylock had taken no decisive steps to fulfil his presumed intention: he had not shed a drop of blood; he had talked daggers, but used none. Was it not still open for him to say:—"I did but endeavour to shake

Antonio's fortitude by carrying matters to an extremity, even to the extent of trifling with the Duke himself;—I never intended any cutting of flesh; at the last moment I should have torn my bond in pieces, and let the Christian go his way, schooled and humiliated by the Jew he spurned!

It may be remarked as singular, that in the trial scene the bond is quoted as specifying—"a pound of flesh, to be . . . cut off *nearest the merchant's heart*."—"Ay, his heart: so says the bond;—Doth it not, noble judge!— . . . *nearest his heart*, those are the very words. It is so:"—while, in the earlier scene, Shylock's proposal merely runs thus:—"Let the forfeit be nominated for an equal pound of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken *in what part of your body it pleaseth me*." May it be supposed that this change was designed by Shakespeare as a conclusive proof of the Jew's malignity, and in order to exclude the plea in court—that flesh could be cut from some parts of a man without causing loss of life, and that Shylock only contemplated that minor butchery? In conversation, at the outset, it would have been at variance with the Jew's friendly jesting tone, would have betrayed his purpose and scared away his victim, to have used other than general phrases; whereas the bargain once agreed to, the wording of the bond was little likely to draw the attention of the careless debtor.

I have sometimes ventured to think that Shakespeare introduced the words "direct or indirect"—("If it be proved . . . that by *direct or indirect* attempts, he seek the life of any citizen")—as an afterthought, feeling the weakness of the application to Shylock's case: the phraseology seems alien to the straightforward bluntness to be expected in an ancient statute.

It is a noteworthy fact that in the old stories whence the plot of this play is thus far very closely taken, the trial ends with the voidance of the bond and the forfeiture of the money to which it related, so that Shylock's subsequent heavy doom is an incident framed by the great dramatist himself. While considering what reasons might have occasioned so remarkable an addition, I met with the following passage in an essay by Mr. Watkiss Lloyd:—"In the novel the Jew's defeat turns entirely on the matter

of the bloodshedding, which in itself is little better than a quibble ; Shakespeare wisely retained, and put this first to degrade the literal principle of the Jew to the uttermost, by exhibiting him foiled at the weapons of his own cunning, when wielded with simplicity and straightforwardness ; . . . but the dignity of the moral . . . required and supplied the more substantial reference to criminality of murderous intent."—(SINGER,—*Dramatic Works of Shakespeare*, vol. ii., p. 553.)

Of one thing there can be no question—that the effect of the scene is enormously enhanced by the addition Shakespeare has seen fit to make. It is equally beyond question that had he wished to bring Shylock more legitimately within the scope of Venetian law he could easily have done so. The fairness or unfairness, therefore, of the court's proceedings must either have seemed to the dramatist in no way material to the interest of the play, or he must have deliberately framed them as unfair, from a conviction that he thus came closest to the heart of Italian nature at the period represented. I incline to the latter view, in which I find valuable support in the following passage by the late Mr. Knight:—"Nor would it have been a true picture of society in the sixteenth century had the poet shown the judges of the Jew wholly magnanimous in granting him the mercy which he denied to the Christian. We certainly do not agree with the Duke, in his address to Shylock, that the conditions upon which his life is spared are imposed—"That thou shalt see the difference of our spirit." Nor do we think that Shakspeare meant to hold up these conditions as anything better than examples of the mode in which the strong are accustomed to deal with the weak. There is still something discordant in this, the real catastrophe of the drama. It could not be otherwise, and yet be true to nature."—(KNIGHT,—*Pictorial Edition of Shakspeare, Comedies*, vol. i., p. 455.)

Did Shakespeare intend one of those subtle, gently melancholy parallels so frequent in his works, where the folly of the fool and the wisdom of the wise, the goodness of the good and the evil of the evil, are seen to move in such closely neighbouring tracks ?

The Jew misuses law to subvert equity, the Duke misuses equity to subvert law.]

'Are we to understand that Shylock, Judas-like, committed suicide when he left the court? There is something peculiar in his exclamation, "I am not well." A man of his stern character would have scorned to acknowledge any feeling of illness at such a time, unless he intended to end illness and health alike by ending his life. Besides, he would never really have consented to become a Christian, and his ready acceptance of that condition showed that he meant to break it,—and for that there was but one way.'

REMARKS ON "OTHELLO."

July 10th—December 30th.—'Read "Othello." Poor Desdemona is scarcely at all stained with the coarseness which disfigures so many of Shakespeare's heroines. How wonderfully the poet indicates the sin of Desdemona's conduct towards her father, in order to mitigate our revolt against fate for dooming one so lovely and so innocent. Brabantio is respected and pitied throughout.

'Emilia is a riddle. How ingeniously she evades Desdemona's questions as to the possibility of wives deceiving their husbands. I believe her to be intended as a woman of the world, with something of masculine hardness and honesty in her nature, so thoroughly versed in the evil ways of a camp, that she could hardly remember whether she had ever committed adultery, or only talked about it as an every-day occurrence—as one speaks of eating and drinking. There is something meretricious in her very warmth; what, it is hard to explain,—any one may have seen the like among ladies of a certain class. Bates's attack on Sykes after the murder of Nancy, in *Oliver Twist*, is of the same type with Emilia's attack on Othello.

'Bianca seems almost unnecessary. Association with her degrades Cassio too much. One thinks that such a man ought

not to be made governor of Cyprus,—I mean, one *impulsively* thinks so, while rapt in the interest of the story, for of course reflection points out that the greatest dignitaries have often been the worst of profligates, and that fashionable immorality has frequently proved a road to promotion. Nevertheless it is against poetic justice that a profligate should be honoured. I dislike the scene where Iago makes Cassio scoff at Bianca. The experiment is too gross: first, because there was little chance that Cassio would abuse Bianca in such terms as in no way to indicate whom he spoke of; secondly, because Othello, however blinded, could hardly have supposed that language so vile could apply even to a fallen Desdemona.

[These notes were written before I had seen "Othello" on the stage. I now recognise the value of an episode, the want of which (with other most important passages), in the ordinary acting version, is almost fatal to the play, hurrying the action and depriving Othello of motive for his jealousy, to an extent which shocks and confuses the spectator's mind, and degrades the deceived and half-distracted Moor into a ruthless unreasonable butcher. On the German stage (I am informed) this drama is never mutilated. Why should Shakespeare's own country persist in treating him so unintelligently? Surely such a poor "water-fly" as Bianca need not be strained at, when the play itself is (happily) ingulped without objection. The scene referred to in some respects parallels that of the "play . . . to catch the conscience of the King" in "Hamlet;" both being needed to supply motive for a deed of blood, both (as it seems to me) being imperfectly conceived and executed, through haste or carelessness on the part of the great dramatist.]

'There is some similarity in the first part of the plot of "Cymbeline." Why is it that one is inclined to have more sympathy for Imogen than for Desdemona? Perhaps because she was less foolish and married a man of her own colour: for, say what you will, a union between a white woman and a black man is revolting.'

[Othello's blackness, frightfulness, and general repulsiveness

are asserted or implied by nearly every personage in the play, including the Moor himself:—(*Brabantio*) "The sooty bosom of such a thing as thou, to *fear not to delight*" (i. 2): "She in spite of nature . . . to fall in love with what she feared to look on" (i. 3): (*Duke*) "If virtue no delighted beauty lack, your son-in-law is far more fair than black" (i. 3): (*Roderigo*) "What a full fortune does the thick-lips owe" (i. 1): (*Iago*) "An old black ram" (i. 1): "The devil will make a grandsire of you" (i. 1): "Erring barbarian" (i. 3): "What delight shall she have to look on the devil" (ii. 1): "Years, manners, and beauties, all which the Moor is defective in" (ii. 1): "She seemed to shake, and fear your looks" (iii. 3): (*Emilia*) "Too fond of her most filthy bargain" (v. 2): (*Desdemona*) "I saw Othello's visage in his mind" (i. 3): (*Othello*) "Haply for I am black" (iii. 3): "Her name that was as fresh as Dian's visage, is now begrimed and black as mine own face" (iii. 3).

In what clearer terms Shakespeare could have presented the idea of a somewhat uncouth, barbaric being, opposite in aspect to the fairness and beauty of Europeans, and physically repugnant to their taste,—a negro or negroid, in short,—I am at a loss to imagine, unless he had described his sable hero feature by feature in the manner of a natural history treatise. Yet most people, perhaps, are inclined to the contrary conclusion, holding, with the late Mr. Knight, that Othello was "one of the most noble and accomplished of the proud children of the *Ommiades* and the *Abassides*" (*Pictorial Shakspeare*); or accepting the dictum of the usually deep-sighted poet Coleridge—that in Roderigo's epithet of "thick-lips," we have "one, if not the only, seeming justification of our black-a-moor or negro Othello" (*Notes and Lectures*); while, on the stage itself, the Moor not unfrequently appears with a brick-dust complexion little swarthier than the countenance of an ordinary sun-burnt Englishman. No blindness so dense as sentimental blindness. In Germany Othello is always black.

It is interesting to compare "Titus Andronicus" (a play partly at least written by Shakespeare), where Aaron, a "Moor, beloved

by Tamora," is distinctly described as a negro,—adversely to the opinion of those declaring that even in the early seventeenth century a Moor could not be confounded with a low-type African—a confusion, by the bye, observable in the old word *black-amoor*. It will be observed that similar terms are employed in characterising the aspects of Aaron and of Othello, and that the alleged impossibility of conceiving a high-born European lady in love with a negro, has not been present to the mind of the author of "Titus Andronicus." To cite a few passages in illustration:—(*Aaron*) "What signifies . . . my *fleece of woolly hair* that now uncurls even as an adder?" (ii. 3): (*Bassianus*) "Your swarth Cimmerian doth make your honour of his *body's hue, spotted, detested, and abominable*" (ii. 3): "A *barbarous Moor*" (ii. 3): (*Lavinia*) "Her *raven-coloured love*" (ii. 3): (*Aaron*) "What hath he sent her? *Nurse* (speaking of Queen Tamora's child by Aaron)—A *devil* . . . a joyless, dismal, *black* and sorrowful issue . . . *Aaron*. Is black so base a hue?" (iv. 2): (*Tamora*) "My lovely Aaron" (ii. 3): "Ah, my sweet Moor, sweeter to me than life" (ii. 3). Farther examples are needless.]

'It would be curious to inquire how far "Othello" influenced Goethe's *Faust*. Mephistopheles has much in common with Iago, even to the very manner of his songs and mischievous revels, and a likeness may be traced between Margaret and Desdemona.

'Ought not the passionate speeches of Othello (and other personages) to be cut short before they begin mighty similes and classical apostrophes? On first thoughts, one would answer—Yes. But experience teaches that people sometimes vent their most real and powerful passions in grandiloquent words. It should be remembered that Shakespeare lived in *Renaissance* times, when Greek and Roman allusions were less hackneyed than now. His Jupiter, Apollo, Lethe, and Styx, may be paralleled with a modern subjective poet's discourse about Odin and Baldur, and the ash Ygdrasil—on whose branches hangs the world.'

[Commentators have been much perplexed by a line in Iago's bitter speech against Cassio at the beginning of the play—

"One Michael Cassio, a Florentine,
A fellow almost damned in a fair wife—"

some discovering a reference to Bianca, some imagining an allusion too gross to mention, some suggesting a change of "wife" into "life" (or "phyz"!) while others dismiss the passage as hopelessly obscure.

May not Iago's meaning have been simply this?—"A man almost degraded into a woman (through feminine tastes and habits);" as when one says—"A soldier wasted in a parson,"—"A farmer spoilt in a king";—a view supported by the immediately succeeding lines—

"That never set a squadron in the field,
 Nor the division of a battle knows
More than a spinster."

This sense might seem clearer were the definite article employed—the fellow, *the* fair wife,—as in the phrase—"Sinking the Christian in the dogmatist." (Compare *Troil. and Cress.* (i. 2)—"There's Hector . . . there's a *fellow* . . . there's a brave man, niece.")]

COMMENTS ON A SERMON.

Sunday ... —'Mr. ——— preached a sermon from John iii. 16. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." On this text he said much that was excellent, but one criticism I may be allowed to make, as it applies to a common doctrine rather than to this particular sermon.

'Remarking that a mere assent to the truth of Christianity is not enough to ensure salvation, the preacher went on to say that unless a certain "change" took place a man would infallibly be lost. [A change of which the man himself was conscious: so I, rightly or wrongly, understood the statement at the time.]

'Now this way of putting the case has driven hundreds of men to desperation. Some who have loved and served God from their

youth, though perhaps with little fervour, must needs despair, because they cannot find how to set about a new sort of love and service, though by degrees they might easily have been taught to improve the old. Others again, who having been great sinners, have left their sins and are striving to do well, must likewise despair, because they are unable, perchance from lack of imagination, to pass through the hysterical phases which they are told ought to accompany the change. [Others again, willing enough to leave their sins, are sent empty away to seek for signs and wonders in themselves,—which do not appear, so the hope of them ceases, and the aspirant sorrowfully accepts the comprehensible evils of sinfulness in preference to the incomprehensible conditions of goodness.]

‘How simple is it to say—a “mere assent” is not enough, but when an assent is so cordial as to influence the conduct it shows itself to be that very belief or “faith” which is so much insisted on. Any man can know whether or not he is trying to do right; and if he knows that he is trying to do right let him know that he has faith, though he may be unable to gauge its extent or quality.

‘Many men, no doubt, have passed from sin to goodness through a severe mental crisis, but this should be held the exception, not quoted as the only rule. If the Prodigal Son’s elder brother had perversely chosen to come before his father in rags, accusing himself of his brother’s sins, and rejecting his father’s assurance, “Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine,” would there have been a fatted calf killed for him? There is more joy in Heaven over a sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine just men that need no repentance:”—more joy, yes; but it is not said,—more love and favour.’

[In a subsequent conversation, of which I sufficiently remember the substance, though it holds no place in my journal, Mr. — stated that those were wrong who taught people to pry much into their own hearts in order to discover whether or not they loved God. To the despondent it may be said—In such a case anxiety to love goes far to prove the existence of love: to those who

count such doubtings admirable, and wilfully cherish them, it may be said—A happily wedded couple do not waste time brooding over the question,—Do I love my wife? Do I love my husband? The best love is the simplest, the most spontaneous, the most unquestioning.

Though unwilling to trust to memory, I have thought it right to make this reference to remarks illustrative of Mr. ——'s teaching, lest my comments on the sermon should give an erroneous impression of its general tendency. Let me point out that in the notes referred to I have not offered any opinion of my own on the great doctrinal question of Regeneration—whether the beginning of spiritual life coincides with a man's natural birth, or with his baptism, or with some conscious act of faith on his part: I merely argue that, assuming the last of these opinions to be true, it does not follow that a certain mode of teaching should be founded on it. Let me also say that though I have preserved these old remarks of mine because in the main I still believe them to be just, I am well aware that they touch but the surface of one of the mightiest and most occult of subjects.]

REFLECTIONS ON PATIENCE AND GOD'S PROVIDENCE.

October 24th.—‘A thousand circumstances must show to every thoughtful man who has learnt to trust in God, that out of present evil comes good, often as its distinctly traceable result. Grant this to be doubtful, it is still a beneficial idea for those who possess it; and those who do not,—as well as those who do,—may proceed to reflect that there are other interests in the world than one's own, that each son has his particular portion and must not expect to have his brother's also.

‘No one will deny that trials and sorrows rightly borne strengthen and elevate the character; and if we deem this world a training school for higher states of existence (as in all probability it is), and if we seek to be fellow-workers with our heavenly

Master in the process of soul development, ought we not to rejoice when the teacher, laying aside indirect methods, plainly sets before us some broad and simple lesson, something that patience must learn by heart and courage carry out in practice ?

‘Patience,—how little is this virtue thought of by men, yet how great its value for him who wishes to be of any worth or mark ! If the most tedious illness or the most mortifying reverse teach patience to an impatient one, he will acknowledge during his future life that he made more way in the world through those seeming retrogressions, than years of bustling activity had previously gained for him.

‘One difference between God and man is this :—we, ignorant and weak, cannot do good to many without injuring some ; He, all-knowing, all-wise, all-good, so interweaves the interests of his children, that from the very sins of the most rebellious he extracts blessings for the whole family. It seems to me far more to the Divine honour to believe that out of man’s contradictions God brings forth his own purposes hour by hour, than to suppose him to have created a piece of mechanism called Earth, filled it with puppets, wound it up and set it in motion, and then rested from his labours and his cares like a workman glad to be rid of his allotted task. We can hardly hold the latter view without making God the author of sin ; and not merely of sin in general, but of every individual sin in particular,—an appalling idea. Better seems it to think that God, having willed that men be free agents, can no more reverse his own will in this than in other respects ;—that consequently his power of foreknowing each individual’s life is the same in kind (though infinitely greater in degree) as that of an experienced man acquainted with the influences that mould human character.

‘Such a view enables one to discover a realness in the relations between God and man which mere abstract doctrine does not exhibit. The question is no longer between an incomprehensible irresponsible being and wretched creatures formed for an obligatory crawl each in its own track, but between an all-perfect father and his weak and erring children ; the children owing their father

obedience, the father owing the children protection, and bound by the same moral laws that bind them—laws which, having their origin in his own nature, cannot be laid aside or superseded ;—the children free to be either good or evil according to their own choice ; the father rejoicing in their good and sorrowing in their evil with real man-like joy and man-like grief, and with real man-like pleasure enhancing the happiness of Heaven by displaying to the ages to come the wonders of his many-sided wisdom in ruling the world ; and finally triumphing with man-like triumph when “cometh the end”—the end of the present stage of this world’s development—perchance of every planetary world that also circles round our sun—and “all things are brought under his feet,” and our whole universe, delivered from sin and sorrow, is restored to perfect order, happiness, and love.’ [In copying these pages of my journal, I am led to reflect how far the views expressed in the later part of them are true or probable. I think them probable, but have less than my former unqualified confidence in their truth. Every year of life teaches us, in lessons of growing force, our own profound ignorance of all that belongs to the world unseen. I do believe in the entire benevolence of God, and accept the inevitably resulting conclusions in regard to the ultimate victory of good over evil, but some of my old remarks seem to me rather too unconditionally presented. Be that as it may, the subjects discussed are worthy of consideration ; I therefore preserve my own reflections on them, offering them, however, rather as indications for a line of thought, than as conclusions which I am ready to maintain by argument.]

COMMENTS ON BUNSEN'S “HIPPOLYTUS.”

Sunday, January 15th.—‘Reading Bunsen’s *Hippolytus*.* This is a most interesting book, establishing clearly, as might be supposed, the difference between the Primitive Church, and that of Rome on the one hand, or those of Protestantism on the other.

‘The baptism of infants appears to have been unknown for

* BUNSEN (C. C. J.),—*Hippolytus and His Age*. London, 1852.

several centuries, and that of children, even, to have been of comparatively late introduction, confirmation and baptism having previously been held inseparable.

'The Eucharist appears neither to have been viewed as a repetition of Christ's sacrifice with the accompanying phenomena of transubstantiation, nor as a mere commemorative rite, but as possessing a peculiar grace in its power of drawing closer the mystic bond of union between Christ and believers, who in their consciousness of that incorporation spiritually offered themselves up as living sacrifices to God ; and thus, evidently in consequence of this act of special communion with Christ, the early Church ordained that prayer at that period of the service should not be offered directly to the Son, but to the Father,—as coming from the whole Church inclusive of Christ as its head.

'The minute definitions of the Athanasian Creed, or even of the Nicene, are by no means in accord with primitive views, which without any parade of a separation of the Divine Persons of the Trinity at the same time that their unity is asserted, made the separate personality of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost peculiarly distinct ; appearing to treat this as the practical part of the doctrine, while the nature of the union of the second and third blessed Persons with one another, and with the eternal Godhead of the Father, seemed to be regarded as a subject for devout speculation.

'To the simple believer of primitive times Christ appeared in no sense *identical* with God the Father, but as his eternally existent son, the special lord of man and man's world ; and the Holy Spirit was viewed as the Divine medium of communion between Father and Son, the revealer of God to man's spirit from the beginning, and the perpetual manifester of Christ in and by the Church. Each Divine personality had therefore his own peculiar place in worship, and there was none of that strange confusion so frequently found in modern devotional exercises, particularly in extemporaneous prayer.

'In the Apostolic Constitutions we find a considerable amount of information on the domestic habits and modes of thought of

primitive Christendom, as well as on their religious and ecclesiastical rules.

'It is worthy of notice that a bishop is forbidden to form a second marriage, or to marry a widow, a divorced woman, a slave, or a person of bad repute, or to marry his first cousin, his niece, or his deceased wife's sister,—such marriages being less esteemed. The prohibition of any second marriage would necessarily include marriage with a deceased wife's sister, but such alliances being mentioned in connection with others known to be lawful, proves that these also were held lawful, though perhaps inexpedient. This is Bunsen's opinion, and one which it would be difficult to controvert.

'In regard to Sabbatical observances, the early Church consecrated both Saturday and Sunday, the former in commemoration of the Creation, the latter of Christ's resurrection. Masters are enjoined to free their servants from work on those days, that they may have leisure to receive instruction in the faith; the whole community are desired to celebrate the Eucharist on Sunday (and indeed on every occasion of meeting for religious purposes); and anathemas are pronounced against any one who shall keep the Lord's Day as a fast instead of a festival.

'The possession of slaves was not reckoned unchristian; on the contrary, it was regarded as in the natural order of things, and various regulations were framed accordingly.

'These opinions and practices of the early Church need not be thought of binding obligation on us, if we hold (and this also in accordance with that primitive Church) that Christianity is a principle of action rather than a system of laws, and that God's Spirit is always present to guide the collective body of believers into such observances and opinions as are suitable to the times in which they live; but though not binding on us they ought to have a certain influence in regulating our views, and more especially in saving us from undue respect for churches and doctrines—whether Protestant or Roman,—whose claims have been founded either on an antiquity presumed to extend to Apostolic days, but now ascertained to be as far removed from that period as we are



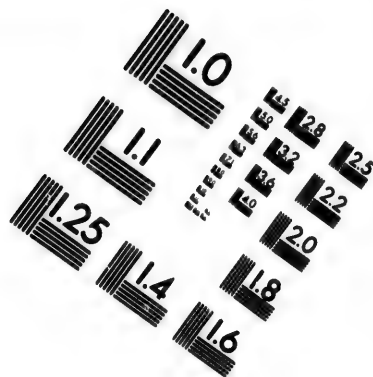
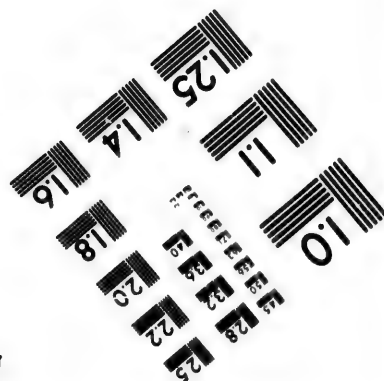
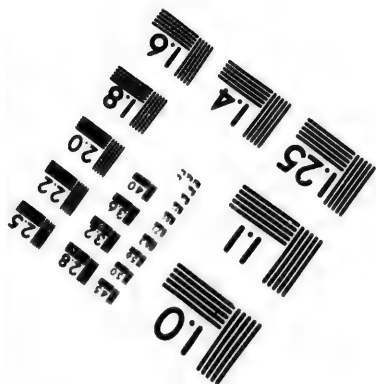
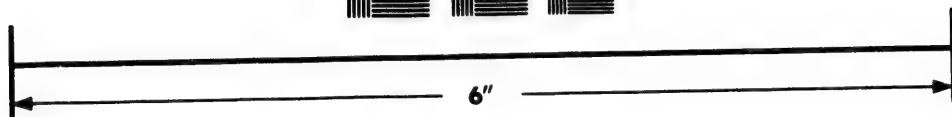
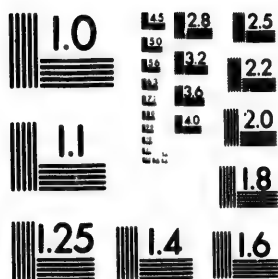


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from the dawn of the Reformation ; or on scholastic deductions from certain passages in Scripture to which the immediate pupils of the Apostles attached a very different and much freer significance.'

LETTER FROM THE REV. THOMAS WOOLSEY.*

"WESLEYAN MISSION, EDMONTON HOUSE,

"October 18, 1860.

"As the humble representative of the Wesleyan Missionary Society in these parts, allow me to feel honoured by your Lordship's favourable recognition of my predecessor, as set forth in the accompanying paper, taken from the *Wesleyan Missionary Notices* for April last, and copied from the *Church of Scotland Missionary Record*. The same in substance appeared in the *Nor' Wester* of Jan. 2d.

["CHRISTIAN FAMILIES AMONG THE INDIAN TRIBES.—The Earl of Southesk, during his recent hunting expedition in the Rocky Mountains, fell in with about twelve families of Assiniboines or Stone-Indians (very wild and savage as a tribe), who professed Christianity, and, so far as he could judge, were acting up to their profession. These families were far from any missionary station, and had not even seen a missionary for many years. Still they showed a considerable acquaintance with Scripture, and were regular in their morning and evening devotions. At their earnest request, his Lordship wrote out for them several passages of Scripture. Their knowledge of religion is supposed to have been imparted by the Rev. Mr. Randall (Rundle), a Wesleyan missionary who went to Fort Edmonton in 1839, and left the country in 1847, on account of ill health ; they have, however, a regular teacher in one of themselves, who has been set apart by them for that purpose."—*Record Newspaper*.]

"The Stone Indians are, without doubt, exclusively indebted to Mr. Rundle, under God, for all the religious instruction they primarily received, as he devoted himself most assiduously to them

* See page 355.

during his eight years' sojourn in the Saskatchewan; and it is a great satisfaction that any of them retained what they had previously received, after being without a missionary from 1848 to 1855, when I entered upon the duties of this peculiar section of John Wesley's parish—that venerable man's motto being, 'The world is my parish.'

"But your Lordship's statement conveys the idea that I have, to a certain extent, been 'at ease in Zion,' at least in regard to some of that interesting portion of the aborigines—not designedly I am aware, but I fear that your Lordship has been misinformed, as I saw the very Assiniboines referred to last February, when they expressed their high appreciation of your Lordship's kindness to them; and these are the very families whom I have visited frequently since '56. They may have expressed themselves in regard to not having seen a missionary since Mr. Rundle left until they met with me; but I think that is all they could say; so that your interpreters must have misunderstood them, and, consequently, misled your Lordship. I would not be so positive, as it is possible for a few families to have escaped my notice, if I had not met with the same Indians last February, and recognised them as the very individuals I had often seen previously. I have visited them near the mountains every winter for three years past, and actually travelled far to see a few straggling families that were not with the main band. During two visits paid to them, between Ghost and Bow Rivers, I baptized 116 adults and 196 children, besides solemnising 28 marriages.

"The above remarks have been made simply by way of explanation, and without the least design of casting any reflection upon your Lordship's observations, and which, I have no doubt, will be appreciated by a sincere lover of 'the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.'

"As your Lordship may probably feel interested in a narrative of events connected with this remote spot, I will endeavour to furnish a few of the more remarkable items.

"In September '59, I enclosed a few letters to your Lordship, designed for transmission from Carlton House to Red River, but

had the mortification to learn, in a month or two, that the letter-carrier had thrown the whole of the mail into the Saskatchewan.

"The summer of '59, we have since understood, was a somewhat disastrous one to many persons in the Territory, through the loss of the chartered ship *Kitty*, nearly all mission and private orders being on board of her. Several of my consignments are amongst the missing. The past twelve months have also proved very unpropitious to this mission, as the Sarcees have stolen two of my horses, two others have died from natural causes, and one has been devoured by the wood wolves. Occasional skirmishes have taken place amongst the different tribes, in which all have suffered more or less. Killed and wounded may be reported amongst the Blackfeet, Blood Indians, Sarcees, and Crees. In fact, a freeman was killed by the Sarcees last August while I was with the Crees and freemen. I shall not soon forget the excessive grief manifested as his friends brought his bloody corpse to the camp. Several horses were stolen,—mine amongst the number, although I subsequently recovered them, on payment of about £6 sterling. Crime has to be rewarded in these parts.

"Last month an unusual occurrence took place at this fort, a Cree deliberately shooting a Blackfoot chief and scalping him near the very spot where your Lordship and I took leave of each other. The fort gates were instantly closed, lest the Blackfeet should take revenge upon the whites. In fact, three of the Company's employés, who were just coming from the boat, were laid hold of by the Blackfeet, but by an almost superhuman struggle escaped, and ran for their lives. Two days after, a few Sarcees crossed the river, and had just seated themselves on the opposite bank, when a war party of Crees, from Fort Pitt, fired upon them, and killed one instantly, and scalped him. The others threw away their robes, and fled, wounded, it is supposed, as several bullets had passed through their robes.

"It is well that your Lordship went through the country last year, as it would have been unsafe this season. An eminent traveller has judiciously observed, in regard to the Indians, that 'in time of peace, no greater friends; in time of war, no greater

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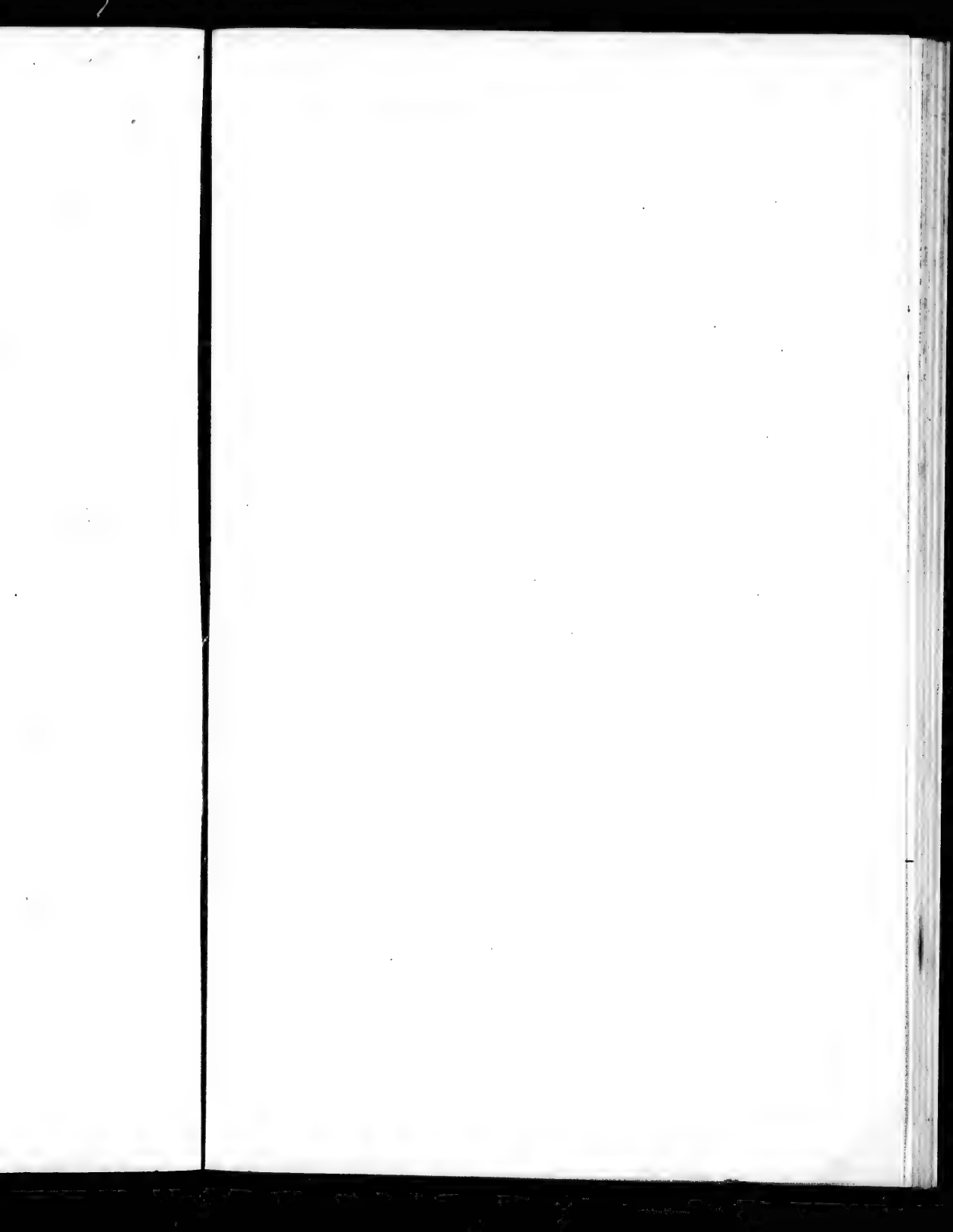
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*The orthography is as follows: "Kes-tā-ye-mek kō-ta-we
 "me-na ke-ka-we : ke-ke-se-ka-ma ke-ta") ke-ken-wa-kee
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Edmonton House,
Aug. 12th, 1859.

Thos. Woolsey,
Wesleyan Missionary.



enemies.' Yes, then their barbarity in proverbial—their hatred implacable.

"When with the Crees last August, I visited the locality renowned for having a large piece of iron there. In fact, an adjoining lake and a rivulet bear the respective designations of Iron Lake and Iron Rivulet. Well, there the iron is, as pure as possible, and as sonorous as an anvil, and weighs, I should judge, 200 lbs. It is on the summit of a mound, but whether it is a meteoric phenomenon or indicative of iron in that section, I cannot say. . . .

. . . . "Just as I am finishing this letter a messenger has arrived from Fort Pitt, with tidings of a war party of Blackfeet having fallen upon the Crees, and killed 20 of them, and that 4 Blackfeet fell in the struggle.

"T. WOOLSEY,
"Wesleyan Missionary."



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